

# AFRICAN CONTRASTS





# AFRICAN CONTRASTS

The story of a South African people

by

R. H. W. SHEPHERD

and

B. G. PAVER

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WE DEDICATE THIS BOOK  
TO ALL THOSE, BOTH YOUNG AND OLD,  
WHO ARE CONSCIOUS THAT HUMANITY AND NOT RACE  
MUST BE OUR LODESTAR.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To the ordinary reader, the anthropologist and to the tourist, primitive life makes a strong appeal, and these aspects are ably illustrated in many volumes on the African peoples. Throughout Africa there are vast areas where life is still lived as it was generations ago, yet these areas are diminishing — the world, and Africa with it, grows smaller. Life takes on a different tempo and a more complex structure.

Nowhere has this transition moved more rapidly than it has in South Africa. Here is a rich field for the trained anthropologist, for the tourist with seeing eyes and for the intelligent reader.

The illustrations of *African Contrasts* are a record of this transition — this blending of a historic past with history in the making, and we gratefully acknowledge the assistance rendered us by the South African Railways and Harbours, the Bureau of Information, Mr. Graham Young and Messrs. Garthorne & Kearnland.

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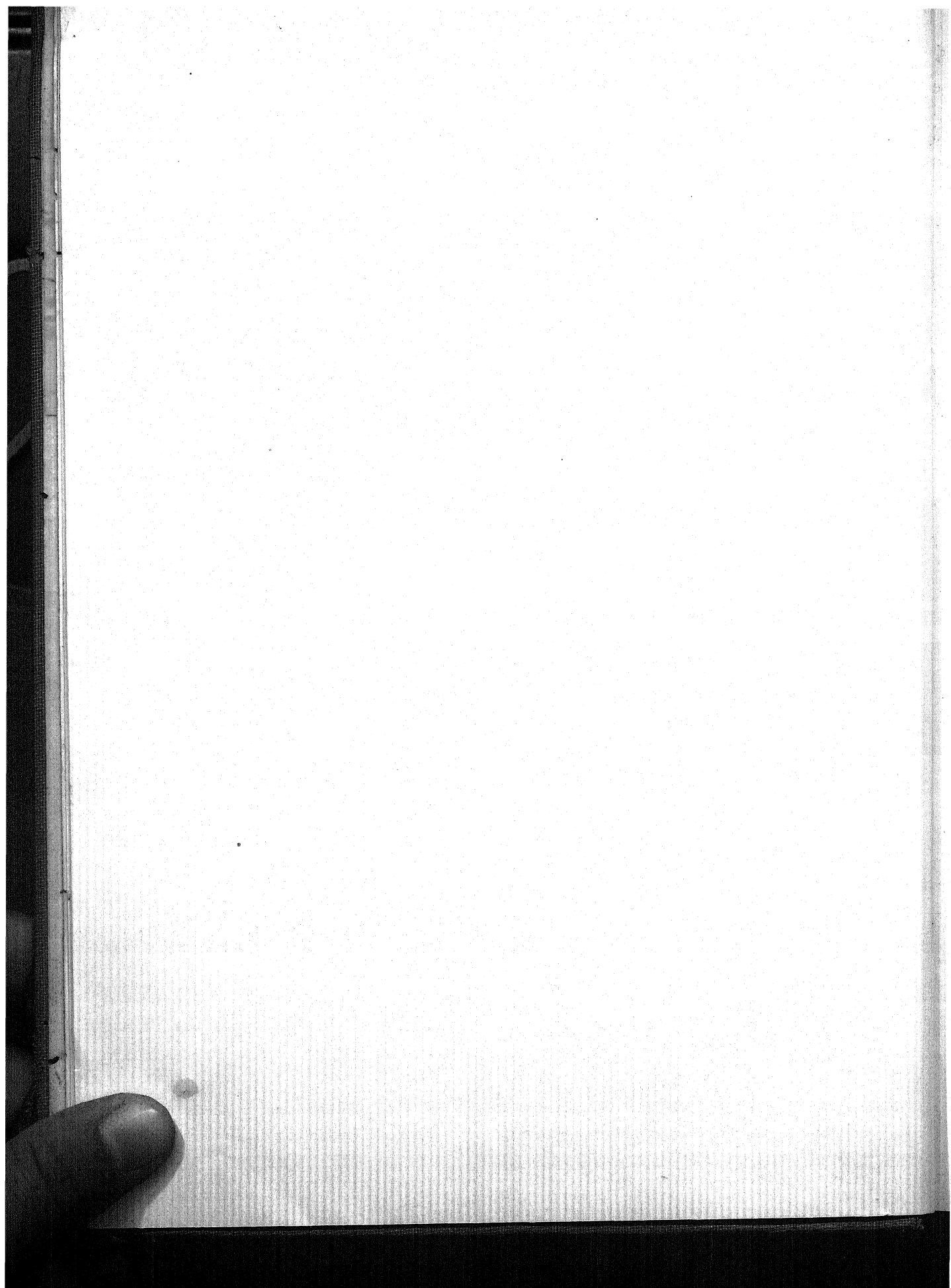
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## CHAPTER I

### A VIEWPOINT

ANOTHER book on Native Affairs to be added to the pile of recent years! So it may seem, but we trust this one is somewhat different. The twentieth century has witnessed an unceasing output of books and pamphlets on the South African Bantu, many of them able, informed, comprehensive — but often arid and too statistical. They are specialist books, and the specialists have become too specialistic. And in the mass of facts and figures, of quotations from Acts of Parliament and other official documents, the Bantu as a human being has become not merely obscured but submerged. The South African racial situation has produced a magnificent crop of expert volumes which are read and pondered by those interested in Native Affairs — and by few others.

Meanwhile the South African Native, with all his rich human nature, his cheerfulness, his expressive language, his love of home, his quaintness, his teasing problems, his poverty and his aspirations, remains to innumerable Whites an enigma, a figure unknown on his human side. He is a 'native' and nothing more, and that too often means little enough. When General Smuts declared to a great Cape Town audience that the population of South Africa is not two millions but ten millions, it was for many a revolutionary notion. It brought out this cardinal fact amid all surface human differences — and these differences cannot be glossed over: that in this land with all its spell and its beckoning future, White and

Black together constitute the population. Their destiny is inextricably bound up one with the other.

Can we therefore see this other, so vastly preponderating section of the population, not as a mass but as units with their daily, individual lives? Can we find on their lips the words that Shakespeare gave as the speech of one of another race? 'Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer . . . if you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die?' To the man of imagination and rightness of feeling this is the authentic speech of the Bantu, alongside whom he lives day by day.

This book aims then at giving a brief, informative, sympathetic, well-illustrated presentation of the life of our African people in a manner that may hold the attention of Europeans of all ages. It would fain be a human document, giving a picture of the Bantu people of the Union under modern conditions, of their aspirations and the manner in which we rule them. Written for South Africans, for visitors from overseas and for South Africa's many friends in other lands, it is the story of the larger part of South Africa's population, not merely the Natives *in* South Africa but *of* South Africa, as a family of mankind and not merely a collection of tribes. It is a book that deliberately avoids the highly technical, ethnological and statistical aspects, so that the Bantu may come alive as men by our side, essentially rich in human qualities, and in the working of Providence sharers with us of the fate or the fortune that awaits this dear, wide-spreading land.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PASSING OF ISOLATION

FOR long centuries Southern Africa lay in physical isolation. This isolation was enforced and ensured by mighty geographical features. To the north of what is now the Union lay the unmapped hinterland of the great central continent, and beyond that stretched the leagues of the Sahara Desert. To the west and east were the far-stretching Atlantic and Indian oceans, bordered by dangerous coasts, with few harbours to invite in the ships ploughing their waters. Southern Africa, and indeed almost the whole continent, except the most northerly portion abutting on the Mediterranean Sea, lay beyond the influences that in other lands led to the building of great civilizations. There was in the south no trading with other countries, with its consequent exchanging of commodities and ideas, no building of cities, no founding of schools, no use of machinery.

When European nations had long advanced beyond the primitive, some of their intrepid travellers began to skirt the western and eastern shores, and in the fifteenth century the southern end of Africa was rounded and a route to India sought and found. But though ships passed to and from the East and there was established at the Cape a place of call, the vast interior remained almost unknown. In Europe great waterways like the Danube have invited the inhabitants of various lands to explore the interior, but in Southern and Central Africa rivers are seldom navigable much beyond their mouths. Even

when men penetrated past the coast, they found little to lure them on. There were towering mountain ranges or fever-stricken valleys; there were wild beasts or virulent insects that took a heavy toll of life; there was great heat and at times devastating floods. Because of these things Africa for long lay unexplored and unknown. It is pertinent to recall that less than eighty years ago David Livingstone was 'lost' in its interior for years at a time.

While Africa thus lay unknown there was ensured the cultural and spiritual isolation of its inhabitants from the world at large. But even among themselves there were barriers that separated tribe from tribe and hindered the exchange of ideas and the growth of culture. The climate, which had none of the rigours of harsh northern lands, tended to make men live at ease. They had no incentive to improve their means of shelter or subsistence, or to extend their world of experience or of thought. Added to this was the fact that they were conservative in custom and habit, frowning on the few men of different race who might come their way, and declining resolutely to follow new modes of life they might embody or espouse. Again, they did not know the arts of reading and writing, and the history of the world has shown that without these arts men and nations make no cultural progress.

When we consider the African of to-day, the long centuries of the isolation of his race make a call upon our understanding. He is living in a new world.

In the fulness of time the geographical and other barriers have been overcome. Africa has been explored almost in every quarter. Vessels of all kinds and in great numbers ply along its coasts. And the aeroplane has brought its depths within a day or two's journey of London and Rome and Moscow. Moreover the ether about

## THE PASSING OF ISOLATION

Africa is filled each day with messages from every centre of the globe. Advanced Africans sit at their radios and are in touch with the family of mankind.

Black and White are in daily contact through region after region, but most of all in the south. The ways of the White man stand revealed, so that the isolation of the Black has been sloughed off. Never did I feel this more than when one day in the heart of a Native territory I passed an African woman separating beans from the pods by belabouring them with a stick. It was a method that carried one centuries back, for it smacked of Old Testament times. As I passed, a pup of a week or two old came yelping towards my heels. The woman called it off with the words 'Yiz' apa, Strike.' (Come here, Strike.) 'What is this you have called the dog?' I asked. 'Strike,' came the bland reply.

We were fifty miles from a railway station and a hundred from a town, but to that upland part had come the news of a big industrial strike in Great Britain, and the dog, born at the time, had been given a name to mark the event.

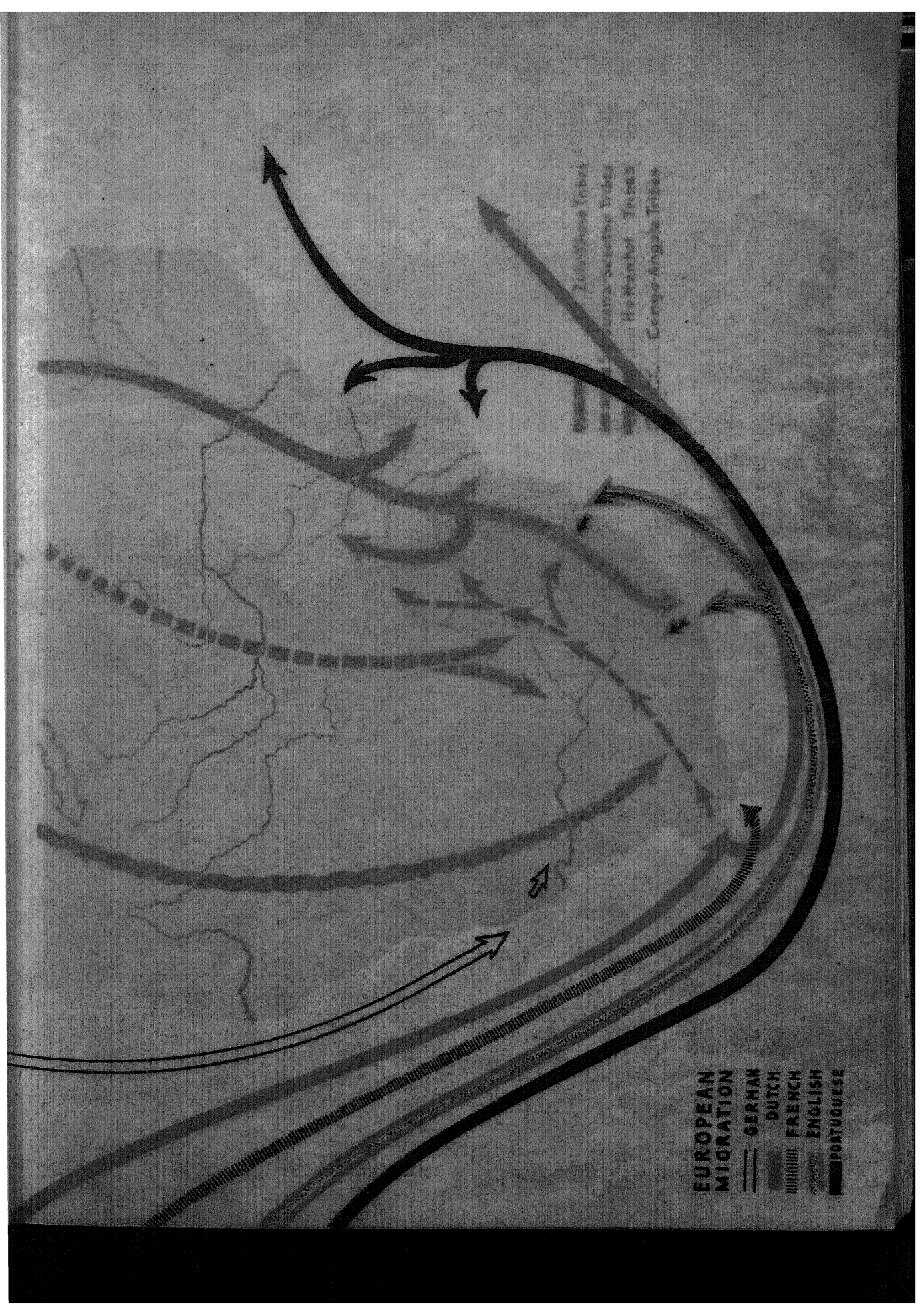
But not only is the White touching the life of the Black, but Black is meeting Black as never before. Representatives of many tribes meet and mingle daily. In the Copper Belt of Northern Rhodesia and especially on the gold mines of the Rand is this manifest. And not only have hundreds of thousands moved south in search of work, but not a few have come on a more spiritual quest. As students in bygone centuries trekked from land to land in Europe seeking the equipment of the mind, so students have come to the Union of South Africa from territories to the north. These lines are being penned in a centre where every year there may be found in class-rooms men



not only belonging to the Union of South Africa but from the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, Tanganyika, the Belgian Congo, Portuguese East Africa and Kenya — men whose recent forebears knew nothing of the contents of books. As a result of their experiences tribal isolation receives a mortal blow.

That a spirit of isolation still exists even in the furthest south cannot be denied. Among certain Whites the slogan, 'South Africa alone' is sometimes raised. There is a desire to sever contacts with lands overseas and even to stand aloof from the rest of the continent. It is a vain hope. The march of events is proving too strong for such isolationism. The second world-war did much for its weakening. Indeed the fires of two great conflicts have fused the peoples of the world into an interdependent whole.

At the same time, a form of isolation, inescapable and meritorious, does exist in the southernmost part of Africa. It lies in the fact that, though a great continent has been partitioned, appreciable European colonisation is to be found in the south alone. Here, taking the place of older isolation, is the new isolation of leadership, founded upon the inexorable interdependence of two million Europeans and eight million Africans, and on the fact that the most advanced example of western civilization is found among them. South Africa is to-day more conscious than it has ever been of its position in relation to the rest of the continent and in relation to the world at large. Indeed it is striving to take the lead in furthering an African culture on western lines, and for this purpose is seeking active co-operation with other regions in Africa and intellectual co-operation with lands outside, so that African culture may be understood and built up.



Zulu-Khosa Tribes  
Nama-Bechuanaland Tribes  
Hottentots  
Congo-Angola Tribes

EUROPEAN  
MIGRATION

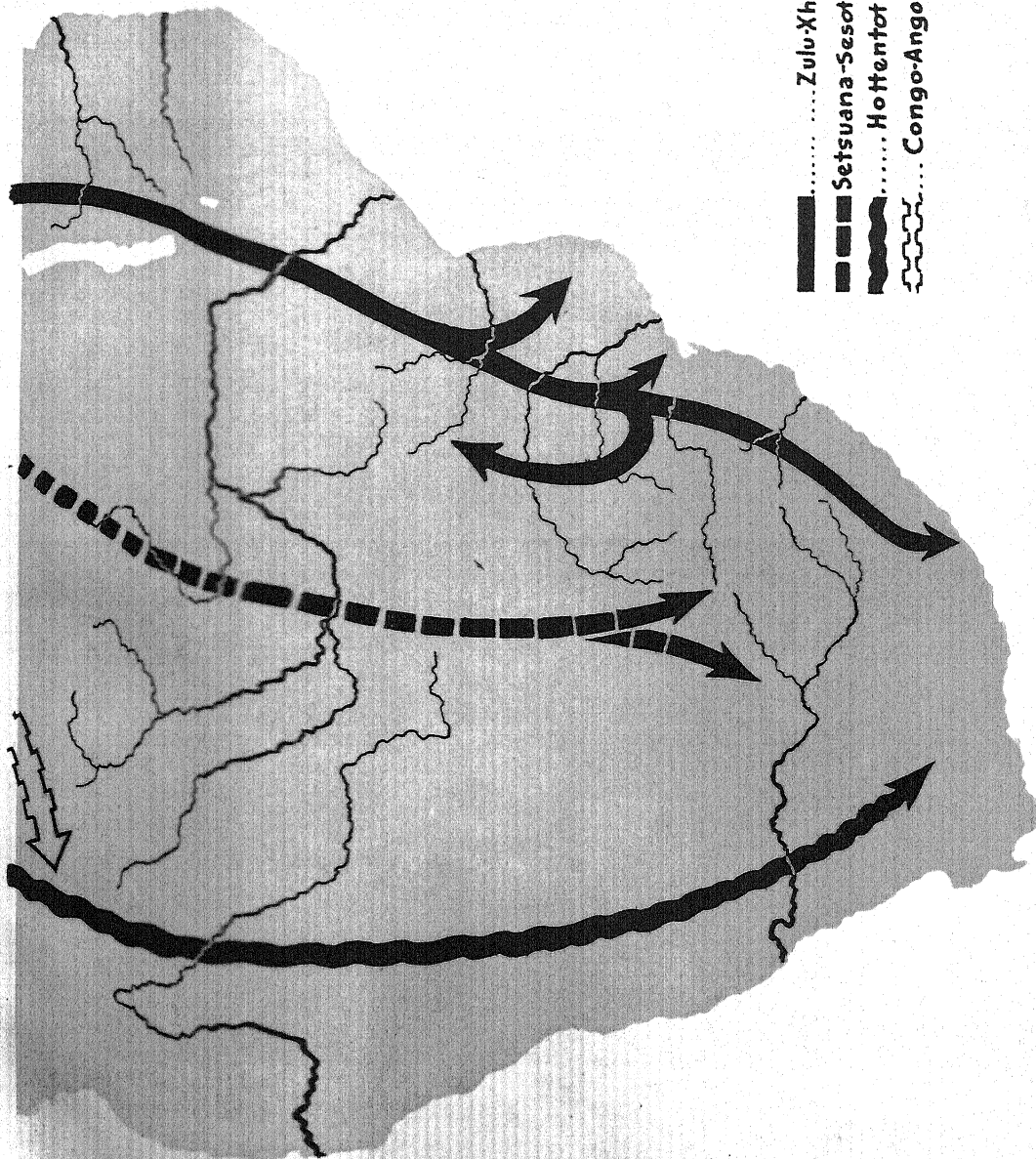
GERMAN
DUTCH
FRENCH
ENGLISH
PORTUGUESE





# Migration Map

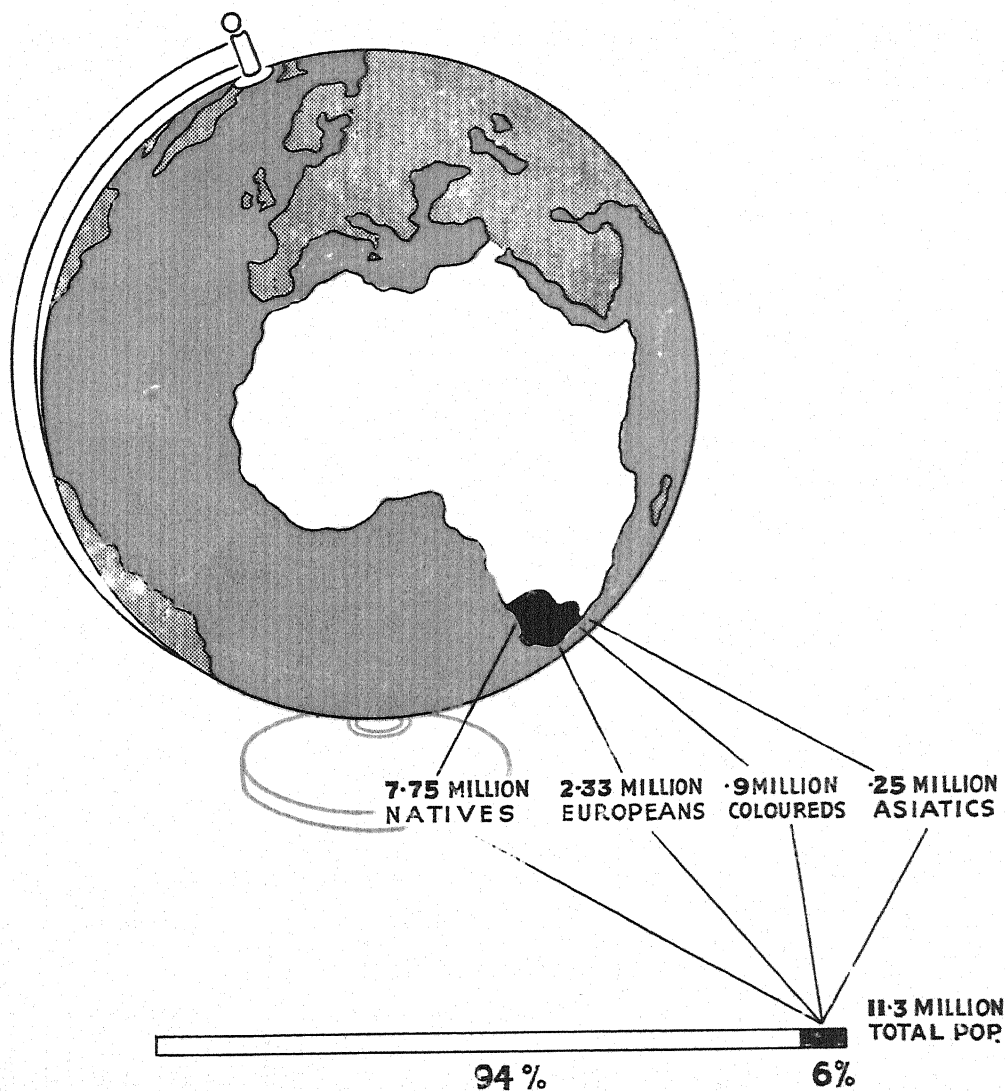
- ..... Zulu-Xhosa Tribes
- ▣▣▣▣ Setsuana-Sesotho Tribes
- ~~~~~ Hottentot Tribes
- ~~~~~ Congo-Angola Tribes



*South Africa's*

TOTAL POPULATION  
OF ELEVEN MILLION

*and-*



*Africa's*

{ TOTAL POPULATION OF  
165,000,000

## THE PASSING OF ISOLATION

It is indeed a fateful role that Providence has assigned to so small a group as eleven million people of diverse race. The United States of America is reckoned a White man's country. The problem of White and Black is there, but the latter number one in ten and their avowed aim is to be 'one hundred per cent. American'. India is not a White man's country. Those of Asiatic stock are vastly superior in number, and there the dominance of the White is sure to pass away. So is it in all other regions of Africa. But in the Union is a situation completely different. The Whites are greatly outnumbered, but, under their leadership and with the physical co-operation of the Blacks, an important outpost of western culture has been built up. The Union holds a multi-racial society. If the race problem can be solved here, it can be solved anywhere. And it must be solved, for mankind as a whole is marching towards a common destiny. Against this background the indisputable interdependence of South Africa's White and Black population gives to the South the task, if not the qualities, of leadership on the African continent, and, some would say, in racial matters an important role on the world stage.

### CHAPTER III

#### A FAMILY OF MANKIND

TO ONE viewing thoughtfully the Bantu of to-day there comes a sense of romance enacted on a large stage. So often the casual observer sees their differences: he thinks of them as Zulu, or Sotho, or Tswana or Xhosa. But far more significant is their unity. And to the imaginative mind nothing less than entrancing is the picture of their migration as a rudderless people, drawn by an irresistible lure to that one portion of the African continent where, locked in a great land area, vast mineral wealth was to claim European settlement, and climatic conditions were to permit it to take root.

The term 'Bantu' is now the generally accepted name for these Natives of Southern Africa who are neither Bushmen nor Hottentots. Last century it became apparent to scholars that there was a great family of languages covering practically the whole of Southern Africa. A remarkable resemblance was traced between the speech of the Native peoples in what is now the Union of South Africa and those of the Congo Natives, on the one hand, and of the Mozambique Natives on the other. Largely through the work of the gifted scholar, Bleek, it became evident that, though they differ considerably in vocabulary and to a certain extent in pronunciation, their grammatical structure is in the main the same. To this family of languages Bleek gave the name 'Bantu' (the common term among them for 'people') at the suggestion of Sir George Grey, the Governor of Cape Colony in the 'fifties of last century.



Although their languages are so similar, the Bantu-speaking people vary greatly in physical type. Some of them hardly differ from certain of the 'Sudanic'-speaking Negroes of West Africa, while others show a type which has been accounted for by a probable 'Hamitic' invasion from the north. They vary greatly in colour, from a dark brown to different shades of bronze or copper. Colour may not be uniform in the same tribe. A scientist accounts for their variations of type by their racial composition, being one-third Negro, one-quarter Bushman and two-fifths from a brown race which originated in Abyssinia and spread over North Africa and beyond.

It is generally agreed that a considerable body must have set out, probably two or three thousand years ago, from somewhere in the region of the Great Lakes, and moved towards the south. It is probable that there were originally two main migrations, one of which divided itself into three streams. In time, each of these streams developed its own languages and characteristics. They form the 'Native' Africans who inhabit Southern Africa to-day — the Tswana-Sotho tribes, the Zulu-Xhosa tribes and (in the Congo and Angola on the West Coast) the Congo-Angola tribes. The lesser stream, originating from the Hamites of North-East Africa, travelled right down to the far south and became the Hottentots of the Western Cape.

The Bantu in their trek appear to have taken 1,500 years to travel 3,000 miles. Most probably they proceeded in a series of great treks rather than in a slow and continuous march.

A few dates have been approximately fixed. Some Bantu resembling the present Mashona inhabited the region between the Zambesi and the Limpopo a thousand years ago. Later two tribes, mixed with Bushmen blood, were living

on the edge of the Kalahari Desert, but towards the end of the sixteenth century they were displaced by other invaders. About the same time the Abambo and Amazimba attacked the chief ruler of the Mashona and passed southwards into Natal. They were followed in Mashonaland by the Barotse who overcame the Monomatapa. Later the Bavenda and Bakwena came southwards and settled themselves in what is now the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, while the Batlaping and Barolong occupied more westerly parts. In Natal the Abambo divided into various tribes, and, in time, passed through what is now known as the Transkei. They appear to have crossed the Kei River in their southward march about the end of the seventeenth century. To-day we know them as Xhosa, Fingo, Tembu, Pondo, Bomvana and so on.

It is all a great story of a people urged on by forces they did not understand and could not control towards a goal they did not see. Man in his groping migrations has changed the history of continents, and so it was in Africa. For in the Bantu we have the tribes of a family of mankind fighting nature and each other, and yet unconsciously moving southward towards the fulfilment of their destiny as a people.

Of the Africa that witnessed these convulsions it has been well said:

To form anything like a true picture of primitive life in South Africa, we have to think of a country without roads, much of it covered with forest or dense bush, through which only paths led from each village to its nearer neighbours; no wells, dams, drifts, or bridges, only a few natural springs and waterholes; a country full of game and beasts of prey. In this landscape, man and his possessions looked far less important than they do now, and Nature was master. Rocks, streams, beasts, and reptiles, thunder and lightning and the changes of the seasons, could take on a meaning

which, from our modern standpoint we cannot easily realise. In the whole of Southern Africa, a few centuries ago, there may have been as many people as there were in Anglo-Saxon England—that is, about 1,000,000, almost all confined to small areas and ignorant of everything beyond a very close horizon. Though primitive enough, their life and culture were not by any means merely barbarous; in fact, they were superior to the majority of uncivilized races.\*

As the Bantu migrated they did not find an empty continent awaiting them, for they encountered the Bushmen and the Hottentots.

No people could lead a more primitive life than did the Bushmen. In size the race was pigmy, their average height being some four-and-a-half feet. While almost yellow in colour they had black woolly hair which gathered in tufts, leaving intervals of bare scalp. Such features and their high cheek bones gave them an ugly visage. They were neither herdmen nor agricultural workers, but with bow and poisoned arrow as their weapons they subsisted chiefly on the game which was then so plentiful. They built no dwellings but lived in caves. To-day in various parts of the country one comes on 'Bushmen's Caves,' and as likely as not finds them adorned by rude paintings showing the game, the hunting scenes and the amusements familiar to those primitive folk. Their pigments have resisted wonderfully the ravages of time and tempest, and it is a remarkable fact that these, the most lowly endowed of all African races, have left a memorial of their existence, while others, with greater powers and attainments, have bequeathed us nothing. As the country became inhabited by inroads from the hinterland and the arrival of Europeans, the game on which the Bushmen subsisted gradually disappeared and they began to die out, the increase by births not being equal to the decrease by deaths. To-day

\*L. Marquard and T. G. Standing, *The Southern Bantu*, 18, 19.



a few survivors roam over the dreary wastes of the Kalahari Desert.

The race before whom the Bushmen first began to crumble were the Hottentots, who, as we have seen, originated from the Hamites of North-East Africa and travelled right down to the far south. 'Men of men' they called themselves. Of an unprepossessing appearance, being yellowish-brown in hue, they were on a higher plane than the Bushmen, for although wild and savage, they cultivated the land, tended stock, and dwelt in huts covered with mats of reed. When the Bantu tribes swept down, the Hottentots, who had no paramount head or chief, were easily vanquished, and either fled to the west, or, unlike the Bushmen, mingled with their masters, a process which was hastened by the widespread extermination of the Hottentot males. The conquerors took over the Hottentot women as wives, and incorporated in their speech the click or suction sounds which are so peculiar and marked a feature of the Southern Bantu tongues to-day.

The Bantu were a more virile race than either of the other two. It is probable that on their way south they learned the art of smelting iron and so came to be possessed of weapons that gave them great advantages over their simpler adversaries. But the chief cause of their victorious progress was their own virility. Their powers of endurance and innate manhood appeared even more clearly when they clashed with the forces of western civilization entering Africa from the south. While the Red Indians of America and the Aborigines of Australia have gone down in the conflict with such forces, so that their numbers to-day are small and dwindling, the Bantu have withstood the shock and have continued to multiply, and to adjust themselves to the new conditions.

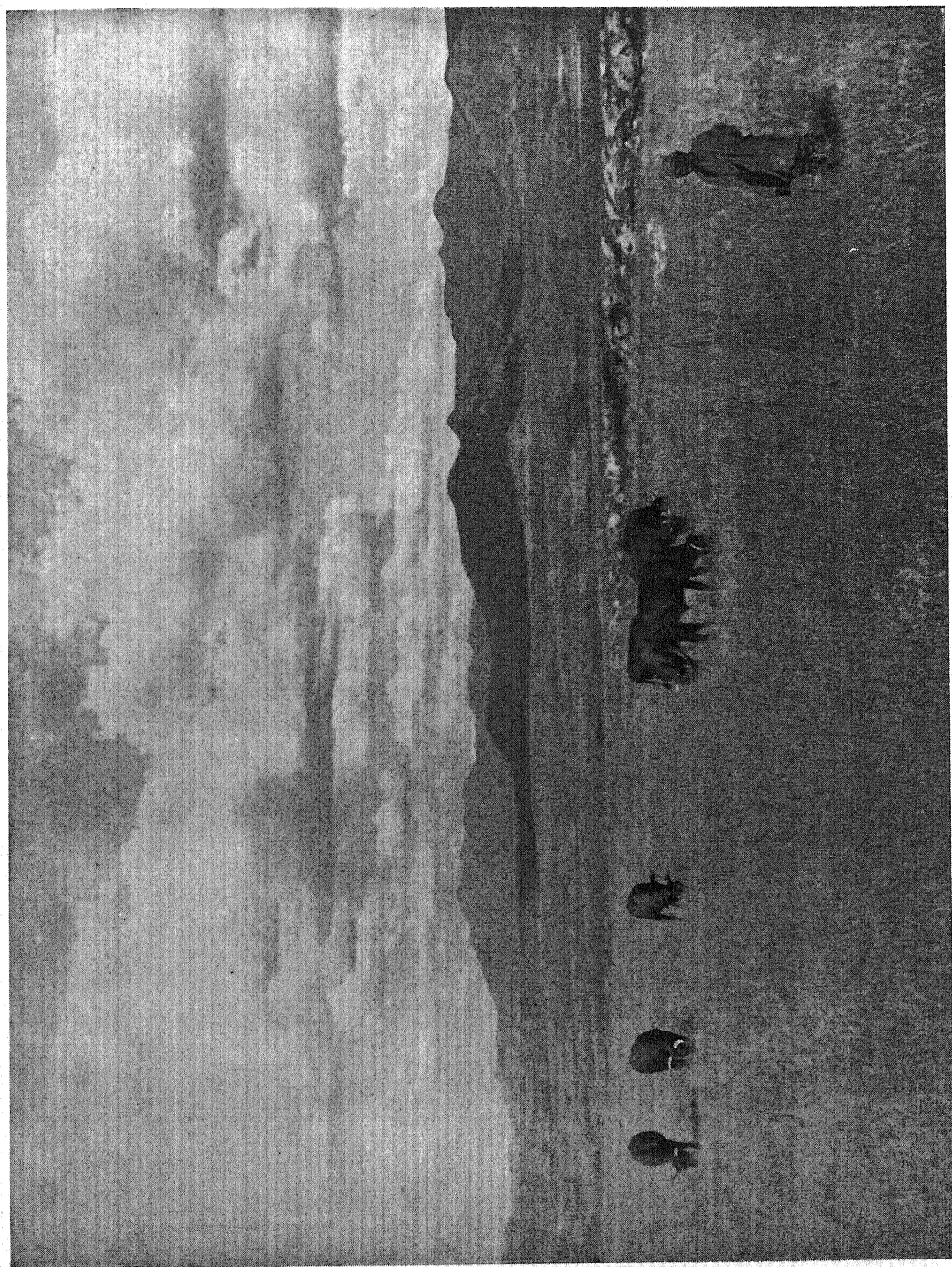
The entry of Europeans in the south and their spread over the southern end of the continent stayed the advance of the Bantu and led to the stabilization of the tribes in various areas, after a few more treks had led to further adjustment. Thus to-day, generally speaking, we have the Zulu in Natal, the Sotho in Basutoland and the Transvaal, the Tswana in Bechuanaland, the Xhosa in their various sections in the Ciskei and the Transkei, the Bavenda in Northern Transvaal, the Mashona in Southern Rhodesia, the Shangana-Tonga north of the Limpopo in Portuguese territory, and the Ovambo-Herero in South-West Africa.

There are disadvantages in so naming them, for it is apt to obscure the fact that the similarities among them are more pronounced than the differences. There is a remarkable likeness in language, custom and outlook among all the sections of the Southern Bantu. Past conflicts and widespread treks divided them up. Present-day conflicts, due to the pressure of western civilization, are revealing to them and to others their essential sameness, and are fusing them into one.

*In a little more than a century the Bantu people of Southern Africa have been called upon to make major adjustments in their way of living.*

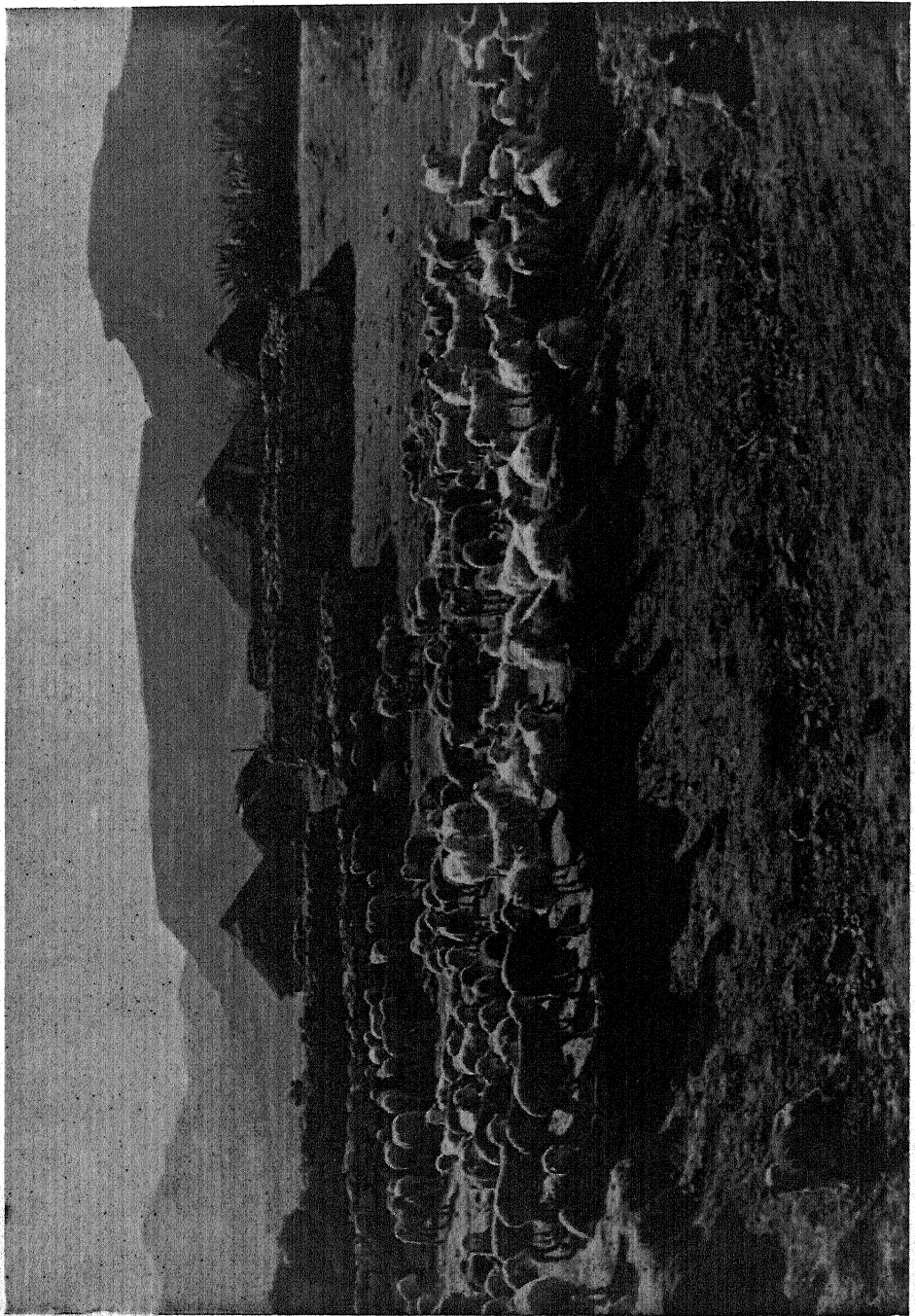
*First, there was the halting of the migratory urge which brought them southwards. Then there was the moulding of the peasant communities on European farms and on the 'islands' of Native Reserves lapped by the encroaching tide of European settlement.*

*To-day the peasant phase is passing. Over-stocking, over-population and soil erosion have taken toll. The population of 'island' reserves is spilling over and a migratory wave has found its way to urban areas. In these areas, living conditions and the labour requirements of Western civilization are weaving a new social pattern whose outline is still vague both to European and to African.*

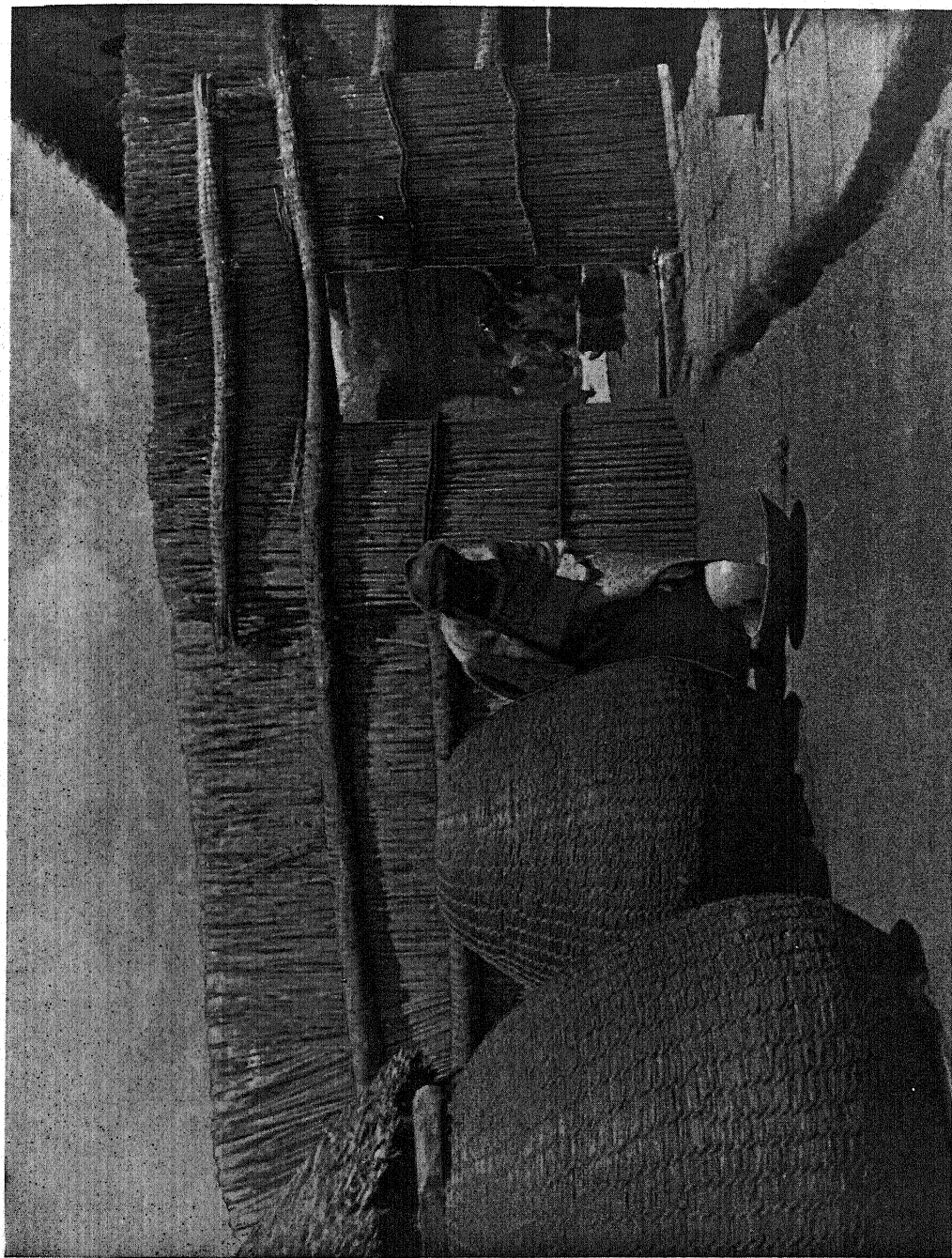


Peace and plenty, and a land where the only shadows were those of clouds drifting over the hilltops.





Border wars and tribal battles which accompany great migrations, ceased, and peasant communities settled on European farms or in Native Reserves.



Maize has become the staple diet of the African. Stored in small family granaries, it is kept in pits dug in the ground, in bags, or in woven baskets such as these.





Cooking maize and rolling it into balls on a grindstone. Generally speaking, maize is eaten, not as a gruel or porridge, but as we would eat bread had we no knives and no butter.

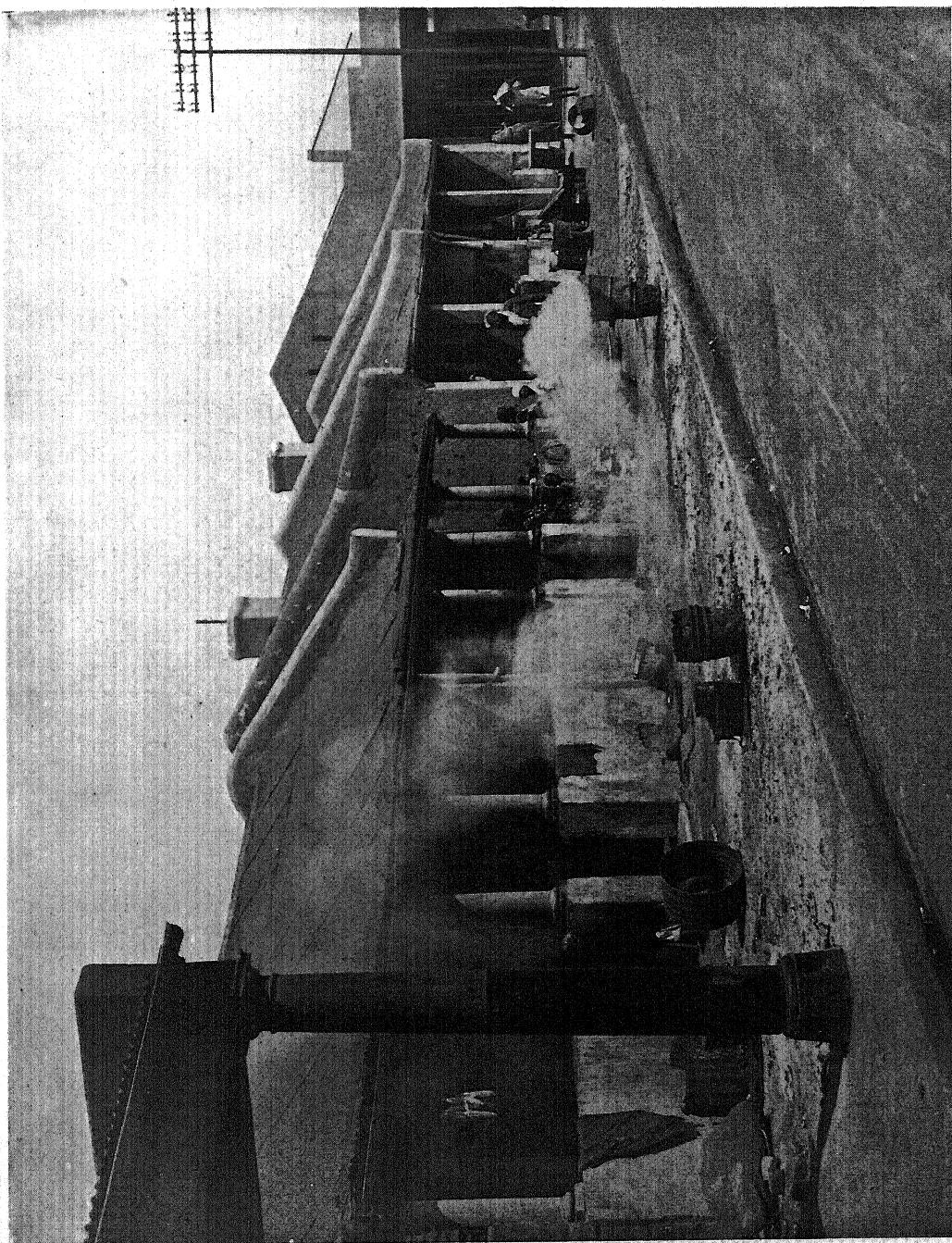


The 'island' reserves of Native areas have become more and more densely populated.



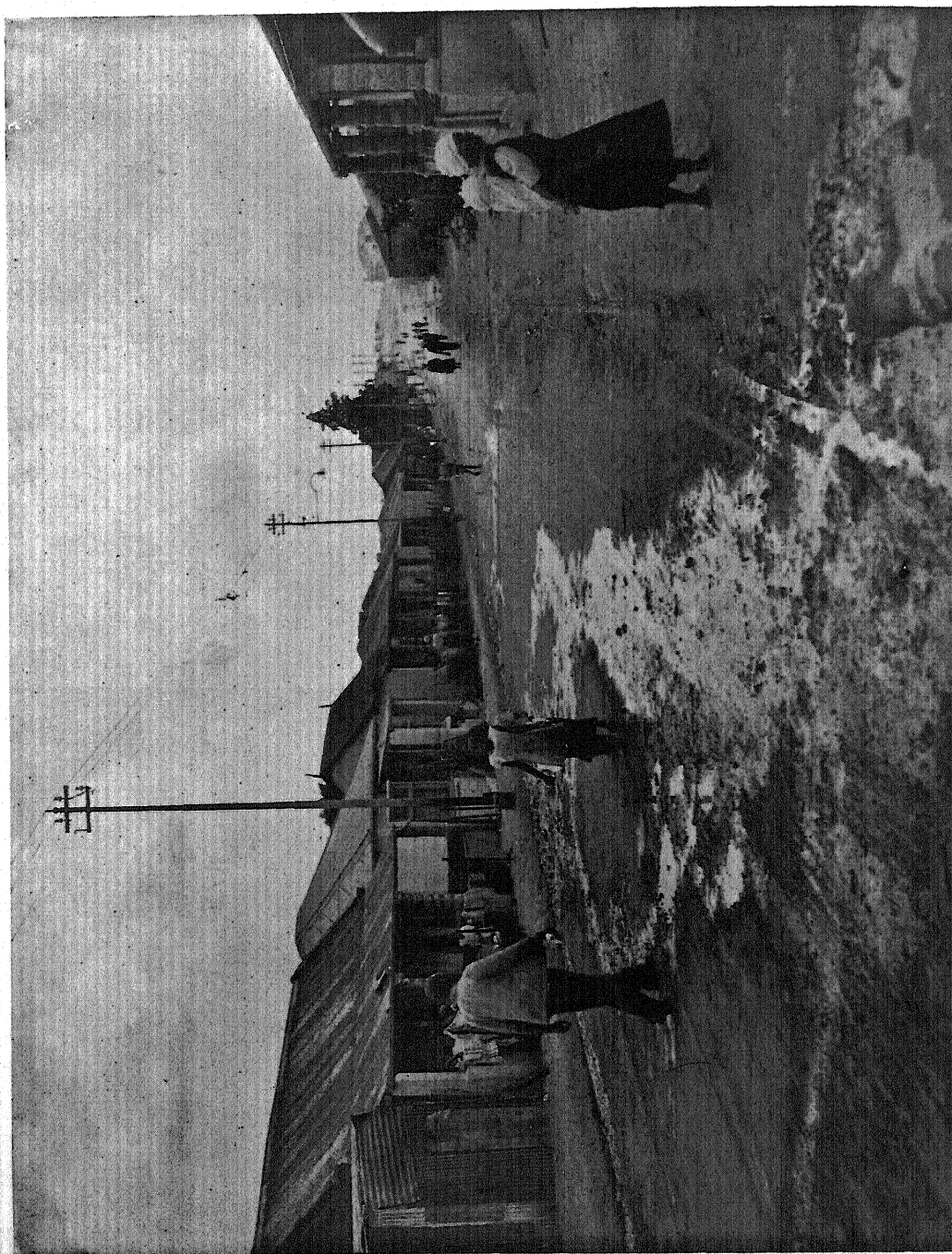


Water for the household, with the early morning sun casting shadows over a rapidly eroding land.



Cooking the morning meal for the people who have been drawn to the European towns.





Rows of shacks flanking a muddy street. Housing may be vile or fair,  
as we choose to make it.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BANTU AS THEY WERE\*

TO UNDERSTAND the African of to-day we must know something of him as he was in the past and as we may often meet him still in his own territories.

The Bantu had a definite tribal system organized to suit their life and needs. The head of the tribe was the chief, the father and protector of his people and the representative of the tribe, so that any injury done to him was an injury done to the whole tribe. In the defence of his life, his men gladly laid down their own; his bodyguard was known as 'those who die for the chief'. No one but a chief might spear him in a fight; for a commoner to do so was sacrilege.

But the chief was not all-powerful. He ruled through his councillors, a ruling aristocracy, largely hereditary, so that younger members grew up trained and ready to take up the work of their fathers, when a young chief succeeded to his father's place and formed his own circle. As a rule, they lived at the Great Place, and were always at hand; but, in special circumstances, additional councillors with special knowledge might be summoned from the subordinate clans. It sometimes happened that the chief

\*In this chapter an attempt is made to describe primitive African life by references to customs more or less common to all the sections of the Southern Bantu. At the same time, it must be admitted that details of customs vary in different tribes. Where details are given they are chiefly taken from the Xhosa people. Chief indebtedness is due not only to the records of early missionaries and to travellers like Lichtenstein, but very specially to an article on 'The Ciskei and Southern Transkei Tribes', by W. G. Bennie, in Vol. III of *The Bantu Tribes of South Africa*, published by Deighton, Bell & Co., Ltd., Cambridge, and the Alexander McGregor Memorial Museum, Kimberley.

went against the advice of his councillors; but he knew that if he persisted in doing this, he ran the risk of losing his people, either by steady, silent secession to a more amenable ruler, or possibly by revolution in favour of a minor brother.

With the fissiparous tendencies of polygamy, the tribe threw out at least one fresh branch with each generation, corresponding to the second of the two chief 'houses' usually recognized. At some time in the chief's life, not too early, he married his 'great wife', a woman of high birth in another tribe. The bride-price for this wife was provided by the tribe; she was the mother of the tribe, who would bear their next chief. Another wife of good birth was designated to the 'right-hand house'; and after his circumcision her eldest son would have a section of the tribe allotted to him — but always in subordination to the son of the 'great house'. Occasionally we hear of a house of the 'left hand', but this was rare. In addition to these chief houses there were supporting houses, assigned to one or other of the chief wives; in the event of a chief wife having no son, a son from a supporting house was adopted by her and brought up as the heir of that house.

The chief and his councillors met for discussion in the principal hut but lawsuits and gatherings of the people took place in the open space between the huts and the cattle-kraal. All the men of the tribe might attend and even speak, but those who interfered to no purpose were liable to be soundly snubbed and ridiculed. The speaking was often of a high standard of oratory, since the Bantu are born linguists, and have a feeling for the clear and orderly presentation of argument, appropriate language, and musical cadence of speech, far superior to the average European. When the speaking was over, the decision

might be given at once, or an adjournment might be made for private consultation. The verdict of the chief-in-council was given by the chief or by one of the councillors, known for his powers of clear statement.

The absence of any written law was not felt, for details of custom and precedent were carried with remarkable fidelity in the minds of chiefs, councillors and people; and so good were their memories that one can imagine few contingencies for which someone would not bring forward a precedent by which to decide the knotty point. But with this respect for custom and precedent went sufficient shrewdness and elasticity of application to ensure a reasonable course of action.

When war was to be made the warriors assembled at the Great Place with their oxhide shields and their assegais which ranged from the light throwing assegai with its long iron shaft and small blade, and sometimes barbed, to the long-bladed, heavy stabbing spear, and a heavy knobbed stick. The doctor of the tribe gave them charms to chew, sprinkled them with doctored water, and took them to the river for final purification. The chief addressed them, and to the accompaniment of the war-song the army moved out, with its commander-in-chief and sectional commanders, and with scouts thrown out. Outstanding fighters wore on each side of the head decorations, generally feathers, and these warriors always sought out those similarly decorated on the other side. It was thought a good omen if an eagle flew over the army in the direction of the enemy, but bad if it approached from the front. Some of the chiefs of a century ago and more were notable tacticians, and their warriors followed them to the death if necessary.

As alternatives to war and cattle-raiding, men gave themselves to hunting and cattle-racing. Hunts were



organized affairs, and might be matters of a day, or take the form of expeditions lasting for weeks, on which women accompanied their husbands to prepare food. Skins of leopards and certain parts of such game as eland and the buffalo had to be sent to the chief as an act of homage. Cattle-races extended to twelve miles or more. Selected oxen were trained to follow men who ran before them in relays, to the accompaniment of shrill whistles.

In between these 'sporting' occupations, the men spent their time in the discussion of tribal and family affairs, social gatherings like dances, ritual and otherwise, the preparation of skins for personal wear, or for shields, and the making of assegais, sticks and pipes.

The public and social life of the men centred in and around the cattle-kraal, where the cattle were milked and ritual slaughtering was done. Women might not enter it, save in special circumstances, as when a bride was 'viewed' by the male relations of the bridegroom; and then she was required to appease the ancestral spirits with a gift hidden in the dust of the kraal. A chief would be buried just outside the gateway of the kraal. And in view of the important part that cattle played in marriage, we can well understand that the attendant transactions took place in and around the kraal.

In an earlier time and in some parts still to-day, the dwellings of the Bantu were huts very much resembling in shape a large beehive six or seven feet high and about nine feet wide. The dwellings were round at the top, being formed of pliant stakes stuck in the ground, bent over each other at the top, and plastered over with clay. The door was exceedingly small, so that a person had to crawl upon his hands and feet when he entered. The fire was lit in the centre of the floor and as there was no outlet

for the smoke except the doorway, the hut was generally as smoky as it was hot. Other huts were made of wattle and daub. In later times, sun-dried bricks were used to form walls which were much more substantial but had none of the permanency of stone.

Inside the huts furnishings were of the simplest. Rush mats, rolled up by day, served for sleeping; and smaller mats, made of the finer rushes, were used for serving food. Before the White man brought his iron pots, buckets and tinware, food was cooked and water drawn in clay pots, cows were milked into baskets of closely woven grass, and the milk was set to ferment in sacks made of skins, and in calabashes. Cut calabashes made dippers and scoops.

While cattle were plentiful and wars kept down the proportion of men in the tribe, polygamy was the rule. Each wife had her own hut, and the huts formed a semi-circle facing the kraal; additional huts might be built, where the bigger children slept, and for the storage of food; the storage hut was held to be very private.

The men cleared the ground of bush, but the cultivation, reaping and gathering of the crop fell to the women. Wearisome the cultivation was, for often the only implement was a sharpened strip of the sneezewood tree. In hut-building the man might cut the rods and set them up, but the woman cut the grass, did the thatching, plastered the parts that were to be plastered, and made the floor, using for this the earth from the anthheap.

The life of the women was greatly affected by the marriage custom of *ulobolo* and the handing over of the so-called bride-price. The custom of *ulobolo* has provoked much diversity of opinion but many who have studied the matter with care are convinced that the transaction was never looked upon as a sale, but as a contract of union,



the *bona fides* of which was sealed by the transfer of the bride-price, and as an acknowledgment on the part of the man that he was receiving or had received something he valued. For among some tribes the payment of the bride-price never ends: long after marriage, a man may be reminded of the good wife he won, and of the tie of gratitude and friendship that would make the gift of another beast an appropriate acknowledgment. The custom provides a bond, binding the family together, and giving the father a hold both on his daughters and on his sons. It is a check on hasty marriage and irresponsible union.

Marriages were often arranged by the parents of the young people, though it would usually be known that the young man desired to marry the girl. Exogamy was and is rigidly observed; marriage within the clan or sib was not to be tolerated. Proceedings usually began with a visit of messengers to the home of the bride, and the handing over of a beast as a pledge of good faith. If the union was favourably considered, discussions began regarding the number of cattle that would be expected as bride-price before the marriage was permitted. This settled, the bridal party set out for the bridegroom's home, driving three head of cattle — one to feed the party until the marriage was completed, a second to 'provide the bride with milk', and the third a cow which was to remain as the special property of the wife, and from the tail of which she would pluck hair to provide necklets for herself and her children in case of ill-health. On arrival, the party was accommodated in a special hut, and a series of festivities began. At one stage, the bride entered the cattle-kraal covered, with two of her maidens, knelt before the men, and was uncovered to the waist to be viewed. At another she was made free of the family supply of milk — which

she had not so far been allowed to drink — by the slaughter of a goat. She was instructed in the duties of a good wife; nor did the bridegroom escape similar exhortation. A great feature was a dance of the men to the accompaniment of the women's drumming on a dried bullock-hide; and after days or weeks, the cattle of the bride-price having been selected and handed over, the bride's escort departed.

A Bantu wife was expected to pay great respect to her husband and his male relations, as well as to her mother-in-law. She was not allowed to pronounce the name of her husband or of his father or of his brothers, nor to use any word containing an important syllable of those names; to help her out, there was a parallel vocabulary of recognized equivalents for the use of women. Again, if she were smearing her mother-in-law's hut she might not smear the part where her father-in-law sat; nor before she had her first child might she approach a hut from the front — she had to go round and approach it from behind.

The man, on his side, was expected to respect his wife as the weaker vessel, as the mother of his children, and the mistress of the house. If he ill-treated her, she might go back to her people; and if her complaints were found to be justified, the husband was required to pay a beast or beasts to get her back. It was proverbial that 'the stick builds up no family'. And no self-respecting man would address his wife in company by her name but as 'Mother of So-and-So', naming her eldest daughter. A woman of character and virtue exercised strong influence in the counsels of the family, and, if she were a chief's wife, even in the tribe.

On the birth of a child, the infant was 'passed through the smoke' on the day of its birth. Twigs were thrown upon hot coals, and the mother swung the child gently

to and fro through the smoke. Later, a goat was sacrificed and eaten.

Early missionaries and travellers have reported that the Bantu were good-looking, strong and athletic. The men were often quite naked when lounging about their huts, but when they went from home they dressed in skin karosses. These were carefully prepared before being worn, being scraped thin and dressed with sharp pointed instruments. The karosses of the women particularly were much adorned. The women wore, in addition to the kaross, a skirt of softened oxhide, and in the case of married women a covering of the breasts hanging to the waist.

The men always went bare-headed and barefooted, occasionally with feathers, or the tail of some wild animal, stuck into their hair or a few beads suspended from one of their ears. They invariably walked with a club in their hands, and generally also a bundle of assegais or darts, in case of their being attacked.

Boys and young men were generally employed in looking after the cattle, which were often removed from place to place in search of pasture. The circumcision of youths among some of the tribes has been practised for as long a time as tradition extends. The initiates stayed in grass huts specially built for the occasion at a distance from dwellings, under the charge of a master who instructed them and trained them in endurance and other qualities of manhood. Their bodies were smeared with white clay, and covered with a sheep-skin kaross. When they had recovered from the operation, much time was given to training in their special dance; and at intervals displays were given in the villages from which the initiates came. The period of seclusion might run to three months; when this was over the boys raced to the river to wash off the clay, receive new garments and return to their people,

who gave them presents and much good advice. They were now young men who would shortly look out for wives; having secured whom and begotten children they became men, entitled to take their part in the counsels of the clan and the tribe.

The outstanding feature of Bantu religion was found to be a worship of spirits as distinct from God himself. The Bantu carried a haunting sense that men, animals, trees and all the forces of nature were the abodes of spirits requiring worship and more especially to be appeased by animal sacrifice. Above all, the Bantu feared the spirits of their ancestors, so jealous were they of their honour and ready, if neglected, to do the living hurt. The Bantu had little conception of natural cause and effect and so the calamities that befell were attributed to the displeasure of ancestral spirits or the witchcraft of enemies. Thus, if rain failed, the event was attributed to the evil influence of some unseen power or living person. It was natural then that a class of men arose among the Bantu who claimed the power of discovering what prevented the rain from falling, and also laid claim to considerable influence in themselves causing showers to water the earth. Their confident predictions, their skill in watching the clouds and foretelling the coming of rain gained for them many adherents.

Most powerful of all, however, was the belief in witchcraft. If a chief or other person of influence was attacked by disease, a doctor, who claimed to be able to 'smell out' wizards and witches, was immediately sent for. He would collect the neighbours into the sick man's hut, set them dancing, raise shouts in which all joined, and work by a process of constraining agreement, probing the minds of his listeners by a series of guesses, to which they replied with the expression, 'We agree', at the same

time clapping their hands. From the heartiness or the uncertainty of the clapping, he discovered whether his guess was 'hot' or 'cold', and so learned the lines along which the people were thinking. Their satellites also primed him previously with such details of gossip as were likely to be useful; consequently his findings usually agreed with the preconceived ideas of the chief and the people.

If the illness was declared to be a sign of ancestral displeasure, a sacrifice was indicated. This was performed by the head of the family, as there was no professional order of priests among the Bantu. There was little ceremony beyond a simple prayer that the spirits would look graciously on the patient. The beast chosen for this offering by blood must be the best and without blemish, and must be one of the family's own. No purchased thing would do. Every family endeavoured to keep a strain of cattle which were the sacred possessions of that house. From among such the sacrificial ox was taken. The one afflicted and for whom the sacrifice was made was assumed to identify himself with the animal slain. The flesh was eaten by the family and friends, the bones were collected and burnt, and the blood kept in the hut of the patient until the next day, when the dogs were allowed to have it.

Very frequently, however, the diviner would 'smell out' someone and name him or her as the one who had caused the illness. The person named was generally some poor fellow tribesman who had become obnoxious to the family, or some wealthy man possessed of many head of stock. On his being denounced, his possessions became the property of the chief and the diviner. Many of the Bantu, both men and women, were annually reduced to beggary or subjected to excruciating torments and death through the pronouncements of the diviner. The death of the suspected was looked upon as a propitiatory sacrifice,



hence his end was sought with eagerness and his escape considered a serious calamity.

'Doctors' were of various kinds. Herbalist doctors had a certain skill in their profession but prescribed their medicines for symptoms such as a headache irrespective of causes; and their knowledge of dosage was of the most rudimentary kind, with the result that not infrequently the patient died of the doctor's medicine. Another class of doctor worked by handling the patient. In such cases the doctor pretended to draw from the patient's body by suction the 'worm' or the blood of the creature that was responsible for the disease; the 'worm' would usually be a small piece of skin previously concealed in the doctor's mouth, and the blood was drawn from his own gums by friction. A doctor was called in if lightning struck a human being or animal. Nothing would induce a Bantu to touch one or the other until a doctor by sprinkling had rendered it harmless.

Some superstitions centred round mythical creatures, such as the lightning bird and mythical spirits of the river, and especially the mythical many-coloured snake of the river. Enemies, it was believed, worked through such agents to bring calamity to those they disliked.

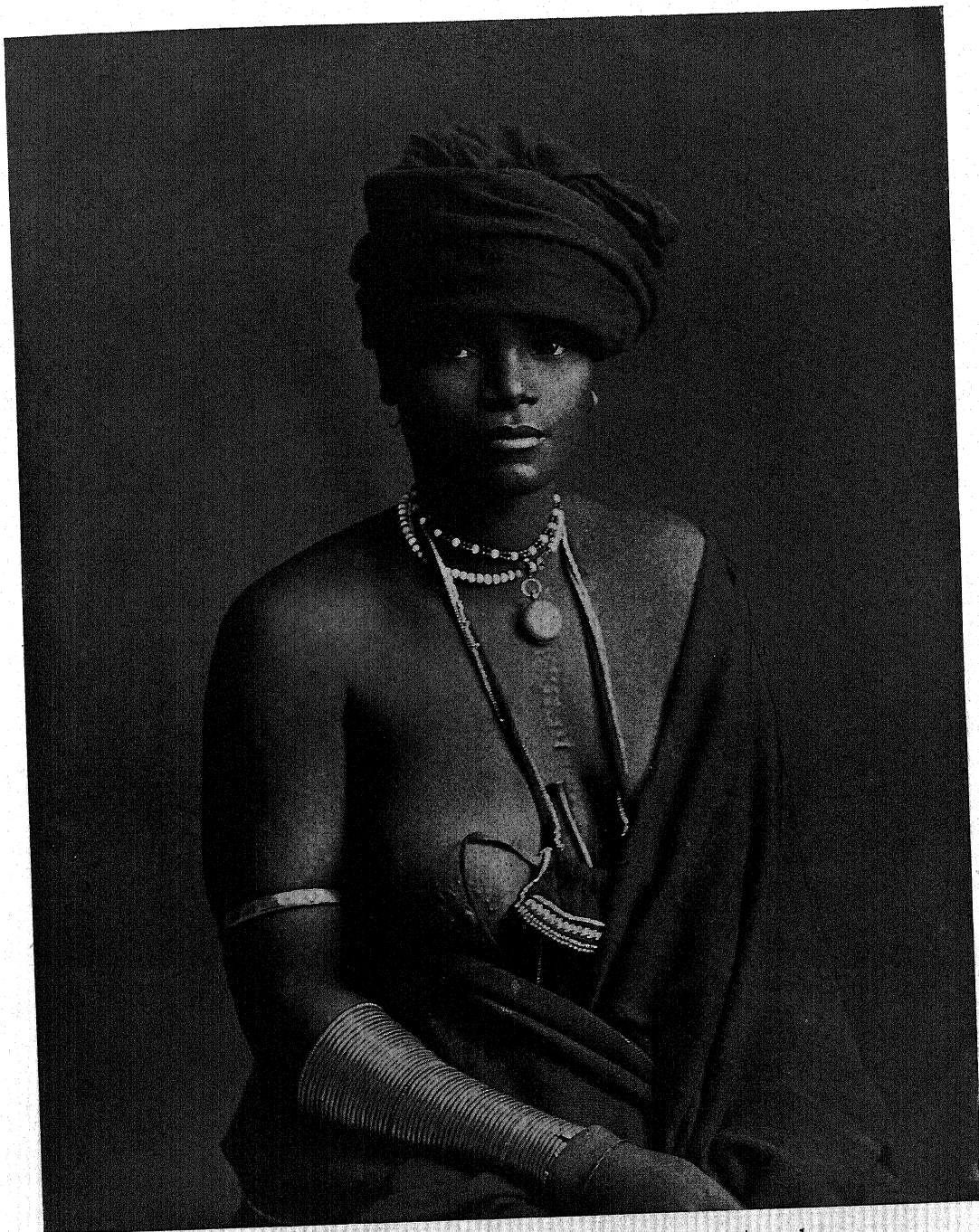
Through all, there were higher notions connected with the Deity. The idea of the Supreme Spirit having spoken and made known His will was no novel one to the Bantu. Their own diviners were continually professing to receive communications from the unseen world. Through such messages the seers guided the chiefs in politics, in war and other emergencies.

At the same time, idol worship had no place in the religious system.

A form of religious ceremony centred round heaps of stones gathered at certain steep or dangerous places by

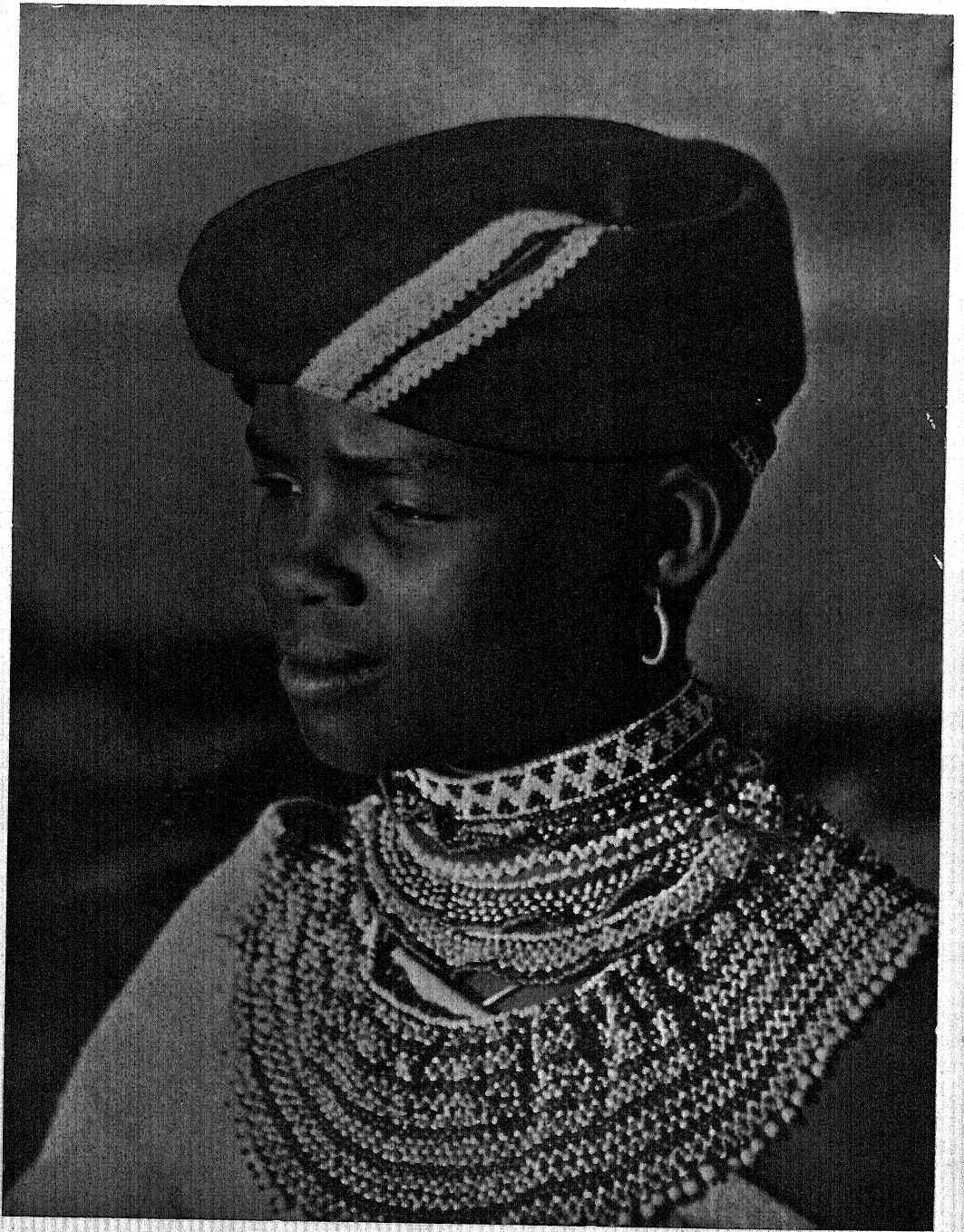
which travellers went. A man on a journey coming upon such a heap would throw a stone upon it and pray a prayer that strength might be given him on his way. Were a company travelling, each member of the group would act in a similar manner.

So great was the fear of touching the dead that it was quite common when a man or woman was overtaken by serious illness to bear them out to the forest and leave them there to be devoured by wild beasts. Corpses were usually disposed of in the same fashion, the body being wrapped in a mat and carried off to the woods by four or five men. Yet the Bantu carried a clear sense that no man dies as a beast dies. Of the men their language said, 'the soul has gone out', but of the beast, 'It is dead'. When burial was resorted to in the case of chiefs, stones were laid on the grave to prevent its being opened by beasts of prey, and it was guarded by men for months. The bodies of chiefs were interred at the gate-posts of their cattle-kraals. When the grave had been dug deep enough a recess was excavated at one side. The body of the chief, wrapped in his kaross, was laid in this recess, and beside it were put the pipe, tobacco bag and other personal belongings which he might need in the spirit world. Those present saluted the dead, crying 'Hail' with upraised arm. The recess was then closed with branches and the grave filled in. It was believed that the dead entered a world of spirits from which they observed and maintained an interest in the doings and welfare of their descendants. Serious departure from tribal custom, or other unworthy conduct, might vex them, in which case they would interfere by inflicting some form of punishment and require to be appeased by a suitable sacrifice. They might be addressed by simple prayers, without ritual, and their mediation with the great Universal Spirit might be invoked.

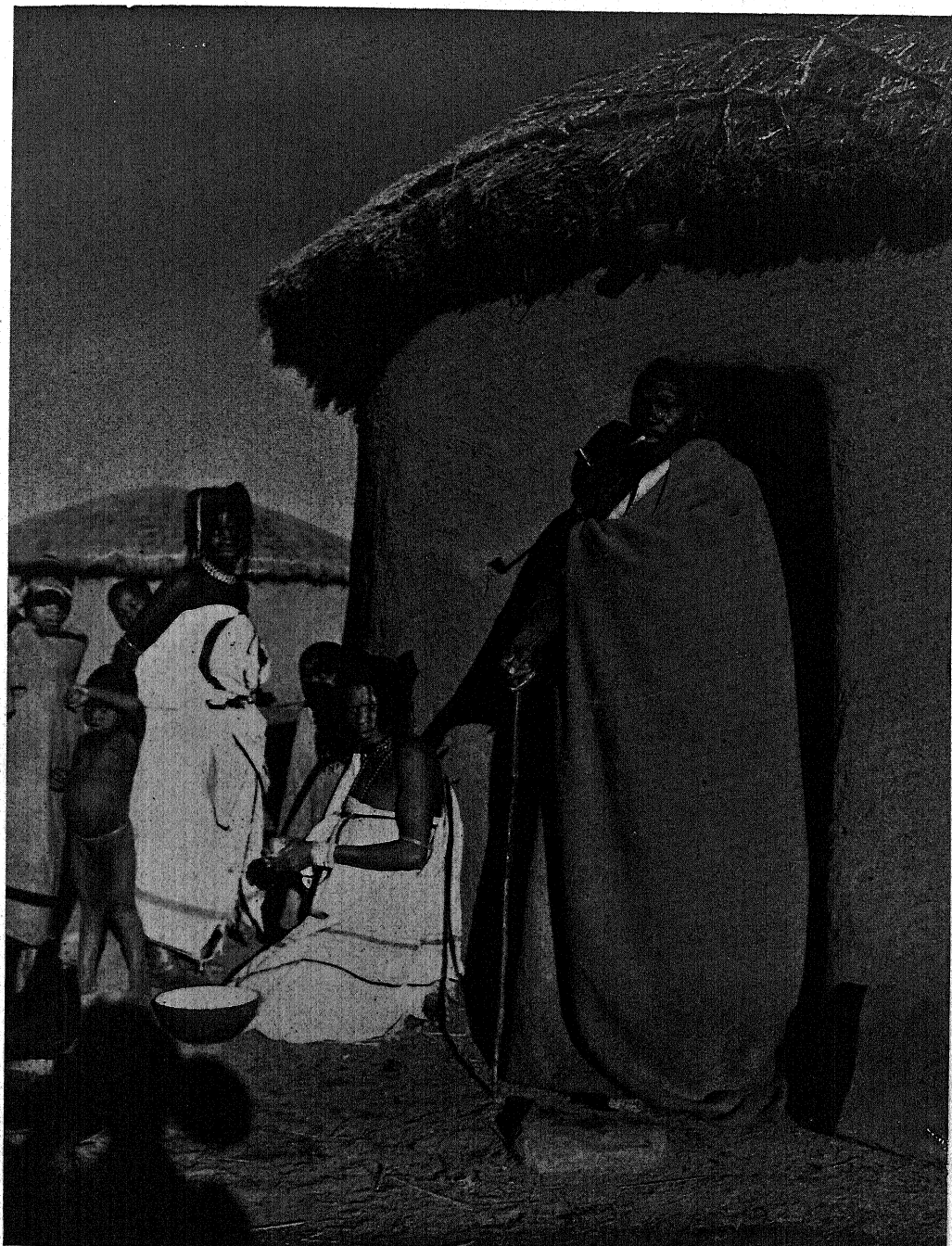


Of tribal life much remains while much is passing. Amaxhosa woman of a passing generation.



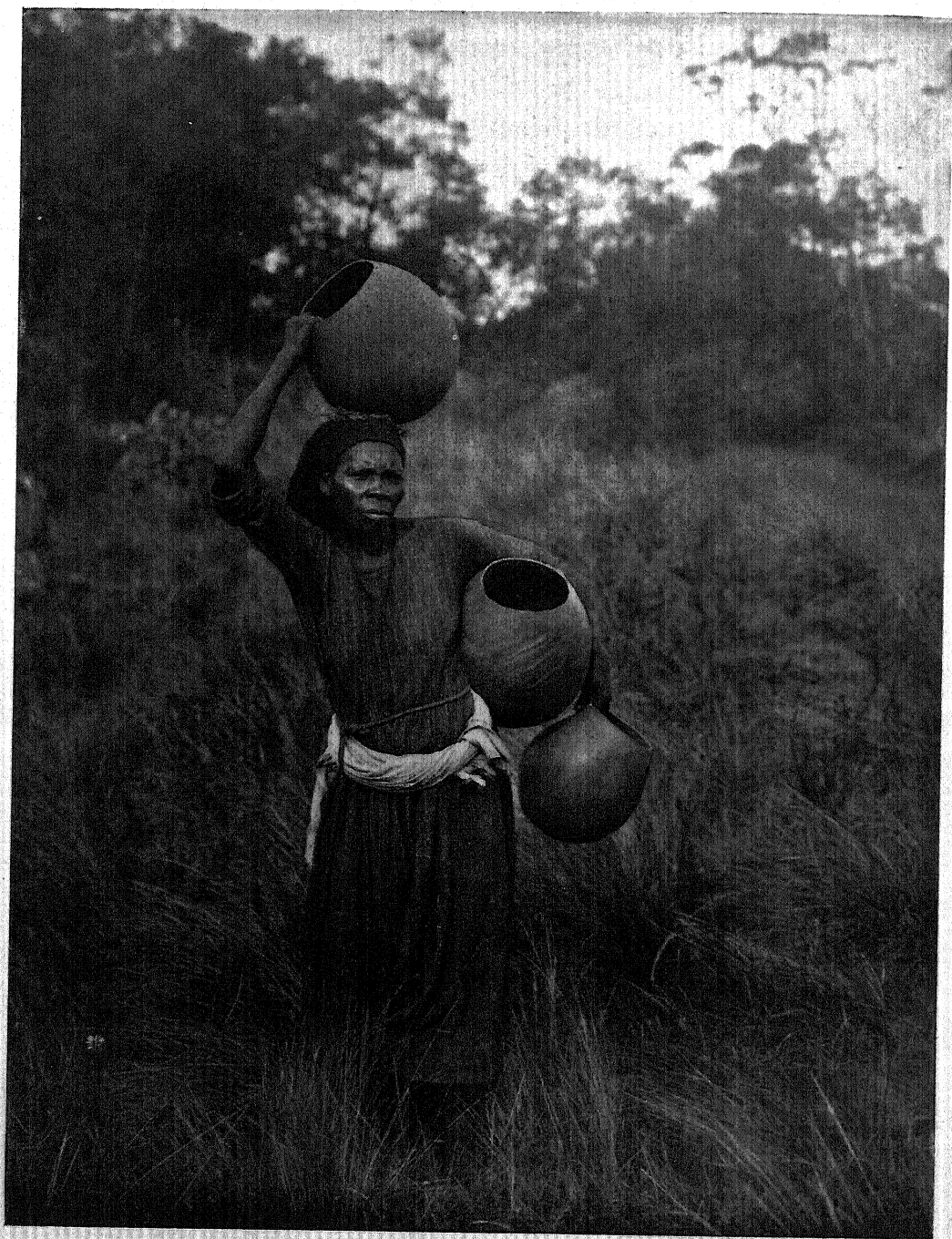


A Pondo beauty and her beads.

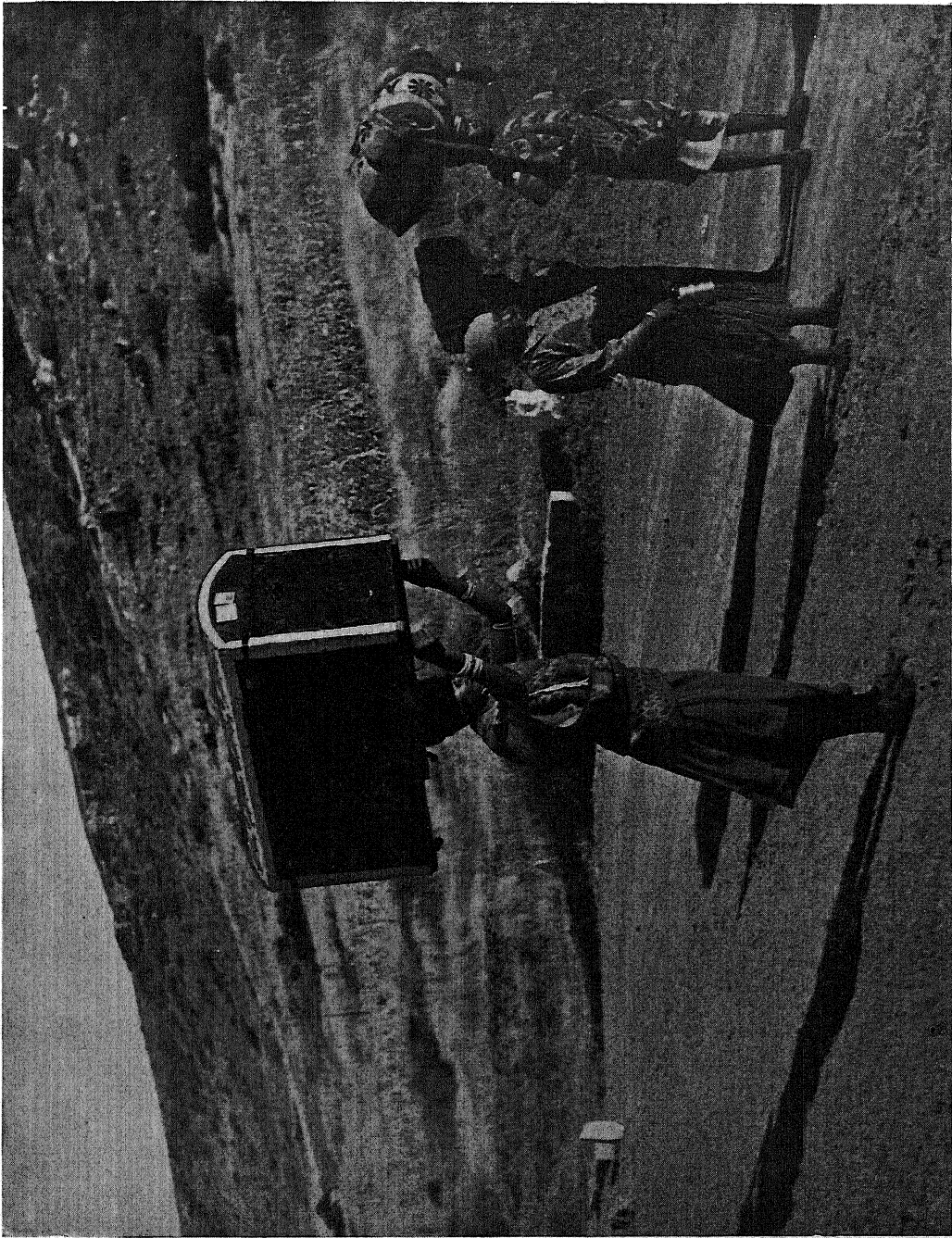


In mud hut or mansion, a man's home is where his heart is.



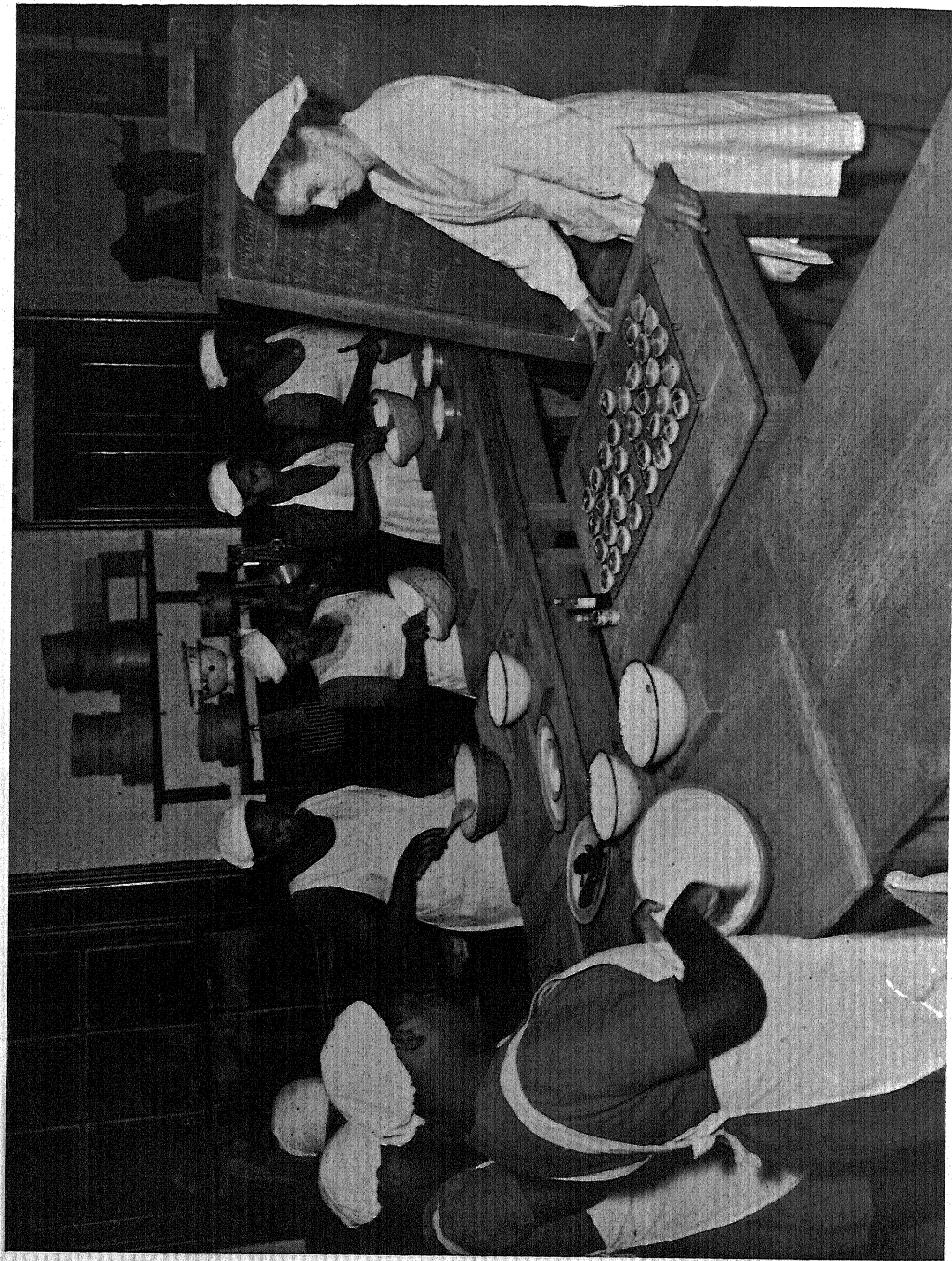


A Zulu woman with her European dress, her age-old pottery, and problems that are common to women of all ages and all races.



Basuto women on the road to a village. In most parts women carry their  
hurdles on their heads.





Cookery classes at Lovedale, Cape Province. Few Native girls have the advantage of a training in domestic science ; those who do make apt pupils.

## CHAPTER V

### THE BANTU OF TO-DAY

THE BANTU of to-day are met with in the Native Territories, on the farms, and in the towns, including the mines. While we may thus classify them, it is important to remember that it is essentially the same man, woman or child we meet, wherever they are found. We do not feel a fundamental difference between the European who lives in a city and one who lives in a rural part. Humanly they are the same. It has become a custom in South Africa to place our African people into various categories, sometimes territorial, sometimes tribal, sometimes occupational. Such classification has its uses for certain technical purposes, but the essential humanity or *ubuntu* of the African should not pass out of sight.

According to the last complete South African census, in May 1946, there were in South Africa the following racial groups:

Of European extraction	..	2,372,690
Bantu	.. ..	7,805,515
Coloured (mixed blood)	..	928,484
Asiatics	.. ..	285,260

The outstanding fact of the modern situation in Southern Africa is that on the age-long, primitive habits and customs of the Bantu western civilization has come crashing. The pastoral life of the African, with its characteristic outlook, has become mixed with the ways and attitudes of a wider world. Government, the missionary, the trader and the industrialist are each representative of forces that are changing the face of a continent.



The official policy of the Union is one of segregation between Black and White. Thus some areas have been set aside in which Africans only have the right to dwell: Europeans are excluded from the purchase of land in such areas, and may only have their homes in such territories for carrying on their duties as government officials, missionaries or traders.

Some of these areas, particularly the Transkei and Zululand, present landscapes of great beauty. Magnificent mountain scenery, with summits rising to seven thousand feet and over, is varied by undulating plains studded with African huts and splashed with patches of pasture land on which thousands of cattle and sheep are feeding. Much of the soil is as naturally rich as any South Africa can offer, so that every year, when the season is kind and droughts do not afflict, innumerable fields show the changing sheen of the maize ripening to the harvest. From these fields myriads of bags of maize are reaped and thus is provided the staple food of the people. In addition, oats, wheat, barley, potatoes, beans and other food plants spring out of the soil which has brooded over it one of the finest climates the world holds.

In such a territory many Africans can be found living their lives according to their ancient customs. Primitive Africa can be seen on every hand, much as we have described it in the previous chapter. It displays itself primarily in the African village where life is patriarchal. The grey-haired sire is recognised to be head and wields almost despotic power. Food is taken from the lap of mother earth, while clothing is of the simplest. Sheep and cattle haunt the scene in sylvan fashion. Almost every object lying around tells of occupations followed in field

or wold. Every day into each of these villages the cattle come from the pasture lands for milking. They are herded by boys and young men, who drive them into the cattle fold. Among the Bantu milkmaids are unknown. The young men, throwing their blankets aside, milk in a state of nudity, and as the pail becomes full they take it outside and pour its contents into calabashes ranged in a row near the gate of the fold. 'How romantic!' says the stranger from another land as he stands in the sunshine and watches the scene. Closer acquaintance robs the picture of much of its charm. A village, set as it may be so picturesquely against its background of rock or kopje, is a spot where sanitation is unknown, where often disease stalks unhindered, where fear of witchcraft is seldom absent, and where too frequently life goes down to little above the animal level.

Even such simple villages bear the marks of the modern world. The huts may be much as of old; the people are by nature the same attractive race—virile, shrewd, nimble-witted, polite, hospitable; a happy day for the men is still one spent at the great place of the chief, thrashing out some tribal questions that are matters of dispute, and when the old powers of oratory can be given free play; the diviner is still an influential figure, though his hold is loosening in some parts; the Bantu woman remains the chief labourer in the fields; the bride-price custom to this day controls marriage and family life. It is true that there is one obvious outward change: the day was when a chief among the Bantu wore a robe of leopard skin, while his followers and the women wore cloaks of the hides of oxen. But almost all to-day find their covering in a blanket. This, throughout a large part of Southern Africa, is the sole garment of the men. Such a product of the western world is symptomatic of a mental change.

## AFRICAN CONTRASTS

A child first sees the light in a valley far from settlements built by White men. All around him are the manners and implements of primitive, pagan Africa. But, as he grows up, he hears more and more of a different world lying beyond the hills that bound the horizon. He sees his father or elder brother go off from home and knows they will be away for months 'at the mines' or in some distant town. When they return, he hears their stories of what befell: of how they saw trains and buildings and machines beyond their power to describe; of how they worked where only dead men should go, in the dust and dark of the underground; of how they fell ill, were taken to hospital, were starved and cured; how at the end of their term of labour they had wealth enough to purchase several cattle beasts; how they spent some money on a suit, with hat and tie for themselves and some clothes for their women folk, and yet had enough left for taxes and other debts. The youth listens and longs for the time when he, too, will know the excitement of that great unknown, will share in its large and vivid life, and return with the prestige that accrues from familiarity with its ways. 'The impact of the new experience', Field-Marshal Smuts has well said, 'must be very far-reaching. New economic needs are developed, new ideas are learned, a whole new mental horizon is growing which is carrying the Native far beyond the old Native outlook and self-contained economy of primitive Native society.'

South Africa declares that its political policy is segregation, and yet the call for the Black man's labour is so insistent and alluring that in 1936 of the 6,596,689 Bantu only 2,962,396 were in the Native reserves. The

remainder were labouring on farms owned by White men, or were at work in mines and urban centres established by Europeans.

Perhaps at no point is one so much aware of the revolution that is being wrought as in a certain compound of Johannesburg. It is a compound in Africa, but it is not African. The buildings that dot the wide enclosure — even the wall surrounding it — have nothing of the milieu that marks primitive villages of the veld; still less have the gramophones and blaring loudspeakers that sound out seemingly without ceasing. Nor can we associate Africa with the playground — high slide, roundabouts and see-saw all complete — on which no children but only adults daily play. But the men in the enclosure, several hundreds of them, grouped in little knots or queueing up in lines, speak of the Africa that is Africa indeed. Their scanty clothing, their frequently odd manners of hairdressing, their swarthy and cheerful countenances, carry the mind back to territories where few White men come, where the maize stalks rustle in the autumn wind and the smoke ascends lazily from open-air fires in front of hut doors.

Into this compound trains from north, south, east and west disgorge their masses of humanity at the rate of a thousand or more each day. They are men, mostly in the prime of life, whom increasing needs or the pangs of hunger have lured from their homes to seek work at the gold mines of the Rand. Nearly 400,000 come each year, and of these a large proportion come for the first time. To stand in the midst of a day's arrivals is to feel oneself surrounded by a surging mass of human bewilderment, memories, hopes and fears.

The first experience for the incomers is to line up for the adjustment of contracts and the receiving of a

metal disc with a number plainly marked. During the months of employment, that disc will be more inseparable from the labourer than even his own shadow. To not a few he will be that number and nothing more.

The next step is, in the confines of a shed, to divest the body of every shred of clothing, and to hand over the garments for consigning to a machine that by its intense heat kills every living thing that may be attached thereto. While this process is proceeding, the men walk in batches to the bathing-room. As they enter, and before committing themselves to the warm showers, they find a special soap applied to their heads. Emergence from the bathroom means for some an experience from which they shrink, probably because of exaggerated stories they have been told by those who have passed that way before: there is but one exit, and at its door sits a European official who vaccinates each man as he passes out.

The donning again of the familiar clothes, by this time come from the deverminiser, brings back a touch with the known: because of all the new experiences tumbling upon one another, these garments seem the only tangible reminder of the simple ways of home, now seeming to recede more and more into the distance.

Not for long, however, is it permitted that they should be clothed. Through an open space in the compound the men are led, and in a large room utterly devoid of furniture they are ordered to undress once more. From this room they pass to another similar in its bareness, except for a pile of blankets lying in a corner. As each man passes through the doorway — himself as bare as the room, since his only habiliments are a metal disc and paper travelling-pass hung about his neck — an African attendant grips him by the shoulders and instructs him in the art of



breathing long and deeply. The recruits are about to appear before the doctors for medical inspection and no time must be wasted in the consulting-room learning what the medical man requires. Recruits found medically unfit are sent home, and for such there is not only the mental pain of disappointment, but ere many days have passed the physical discomfort of vaccination coming to a height — and all apparently for naught.

In front of the labourer who is certified as fit stretches a vista of new experiences inseparable from a year or so of labouring at the mines. But, though he is handled with understanding born of a knowledge of his language and lifelong sympathy with Bantu ways, his first days in the compound must seem to bring an overwhelming clash hurled at him by the forces of the West.

In the towns, similar new experiences are encountered. Attached to every South African town, small or large, there is a 'location', or it may be more than one, where the Bantu are housed separate from the White inhabitants. Sometimes in the case of the larger cities these 'locations' are miles away from the centre of the city, and workers can be seen streaming from them in hundreds or thousands in the early morning, and back to them in the late afternoon or evening. Africans are generally employed in towns or cities as domestic servants, messengers, office caretakers, shop handymen, police or factory workers. As we shall see, many conditions not applied to Europeans are attached to their employment. Though an improvement is being effected in some municipalities, often the housing conditions provided for Africans and the public services allotted to them leave much to be desired. Nothing could be more drab than life in a location of many South African towns. Yet it spells the first and sometimes lasting contacts made

by multitudes of Africans with the ways of the Western world.

On farms owned by Europeans great numbers of Africans are employed. Their conditions are often nearer to the conditions with which the Bantu are familiar in the Native Reserves. Many farmers take a paternal interest in their servants, but on other farms the conditions of labour and the wages given keep the farm servants on the poverty line. Even on remote farms, however, as well as on those nearer the towns, the stirrings of a new life have come. Many farmers have found it to their advantage to improve living conditions and wages and also to provide amenities like schools, because the attractions of urban life are luring country dwellers from their simpler ways.

The truth is that in South Africa to-day we are witnessing most of the gains and the horrors of the industrial revolution as they were seen in England a century ago, with the additional complication that many of those moving citywards are people of colour with primitive Africa as their ancestral home, knowing only its pastoral ways, and with no real share in the White man's mental or spiritual heritage to soften the impact.

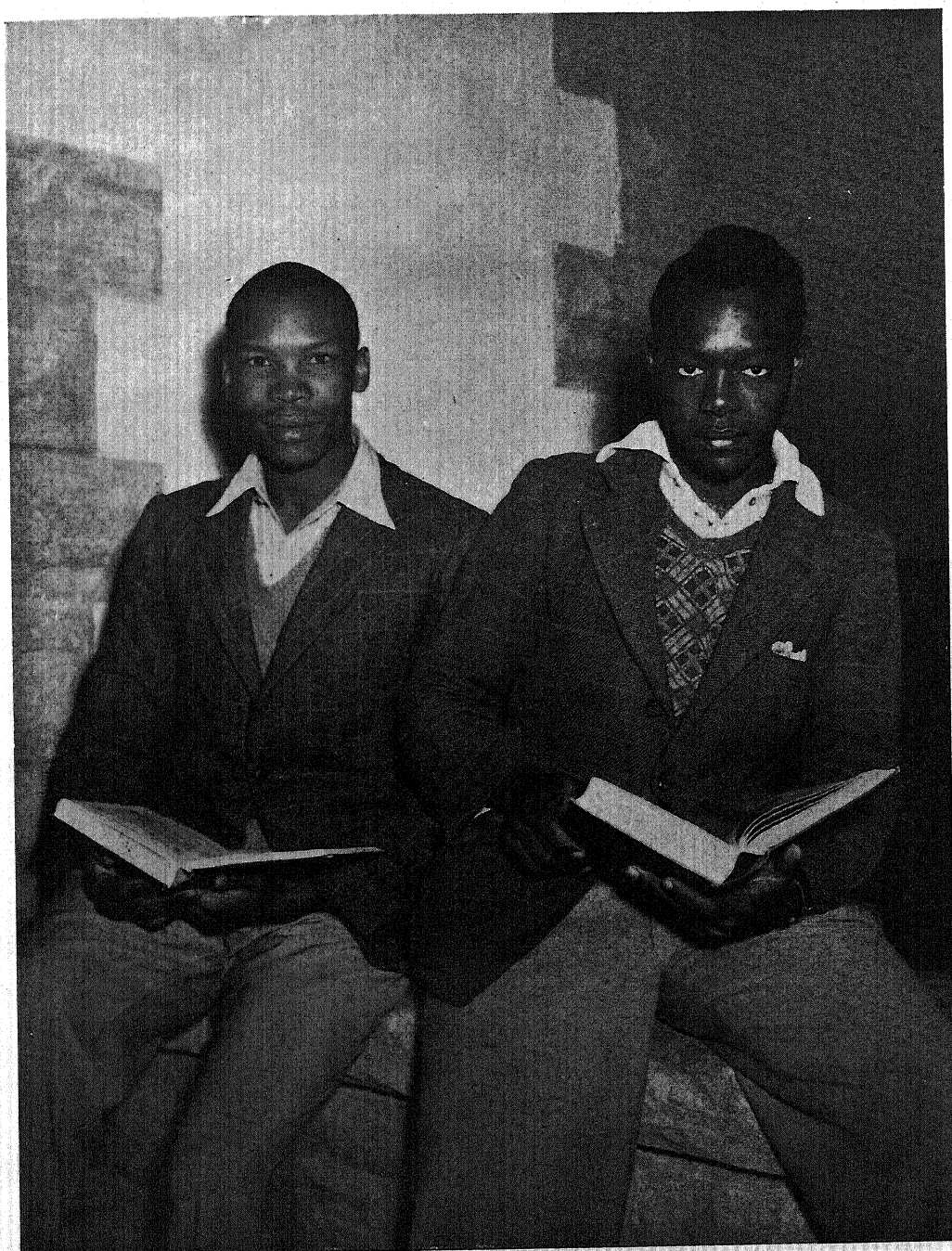
In short, the contrasts presented by the meeting of the systems of Africa and of Europe are frequently glaring and even tragic. Contact with the industrialism and individualism of the West has at first a demoralizing effect upon primitive African races. Old sanctions are loosened and the new must battle long to make good the losses sustained. The adoption of some of the new along with the retention of much of the old makes for situations sometimes ludicrous and often unhappy. In circumstance after circumstance, the Bantu are bewildered and confused, for their old standards have perished or have been found

woefully insufficient. The marvel to many, however, is that the Bantu are not more bewildered than they are and that they adapt themselves with readiness to situations so extremely novel. They are aided, no doubt, by outstanding powers of imitation, but also by mental capacity worthy of esteem. Unfortunately, as in the similar circumstances of other lands, their lack of skill in the industrial world makes them most commonly day-labourers under the new regime, drawing the inadequate wages that too long have been the lot of such. Thus dire poverty is often their bedfellow. While the new order has brought countless blessings, the evil to which it has given birth cannot be denied. Indeed, it makes a formidable sum. Africa is going to school, and the lessons she learns are not all making for life and peace.

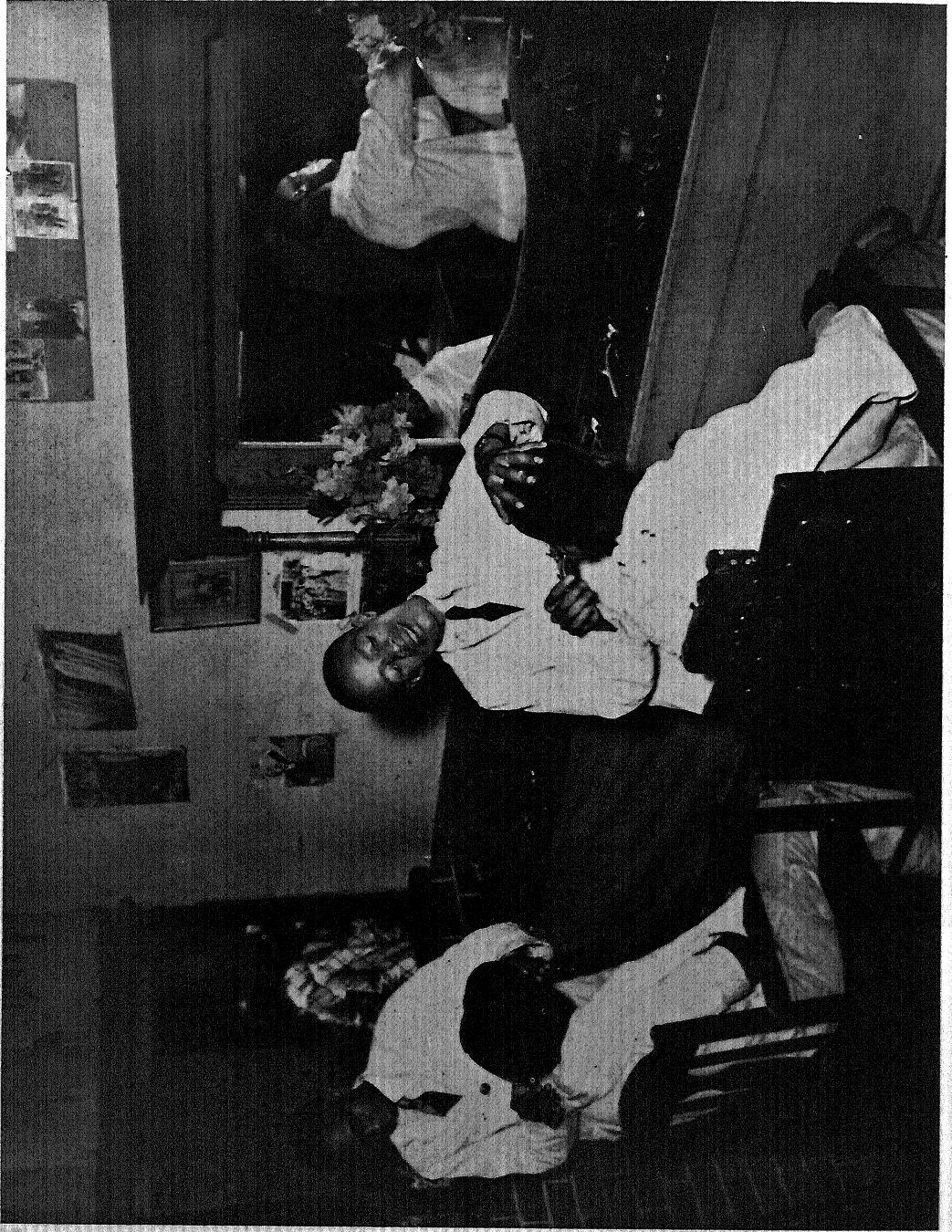


Linotype operator on the staff of the *Bantu World* and artist in his leisure hours, Killion Tenyane (on the right) discusses one of fifty landscapes at an exhibition of his pictures.



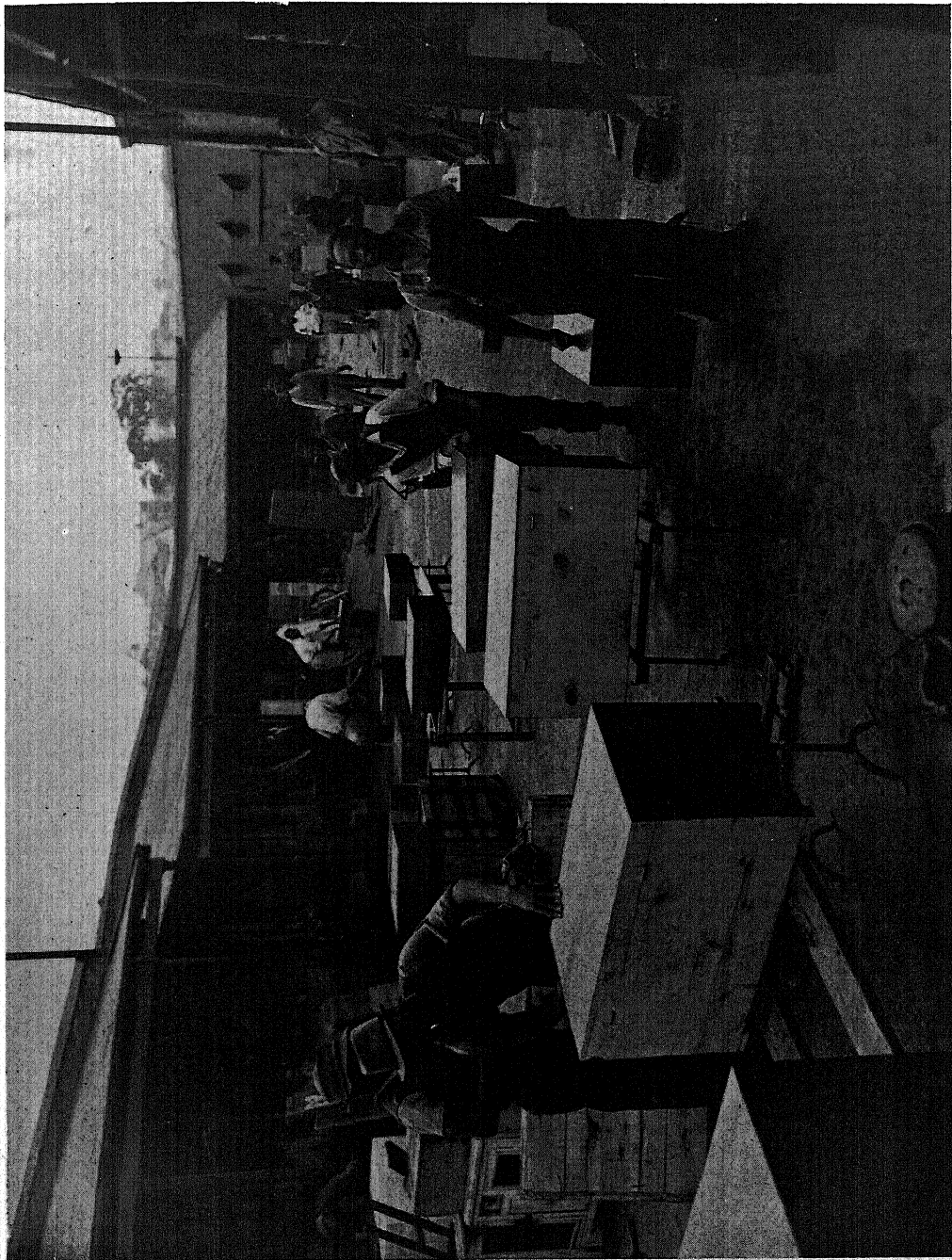


Two students of Fort Hare College, Cape Province: Seretse, grandson of Khama and future ruler of the Bamangwato of Bechuanaland, is taking an Arts degree (Law and Administration) and Charlie Sjonje of Kenya Colony, who is taking an Arts course.



Sometimes South Africa's colour bar does provide an avenue of employment.  
Only Africans cut Africans' hair.



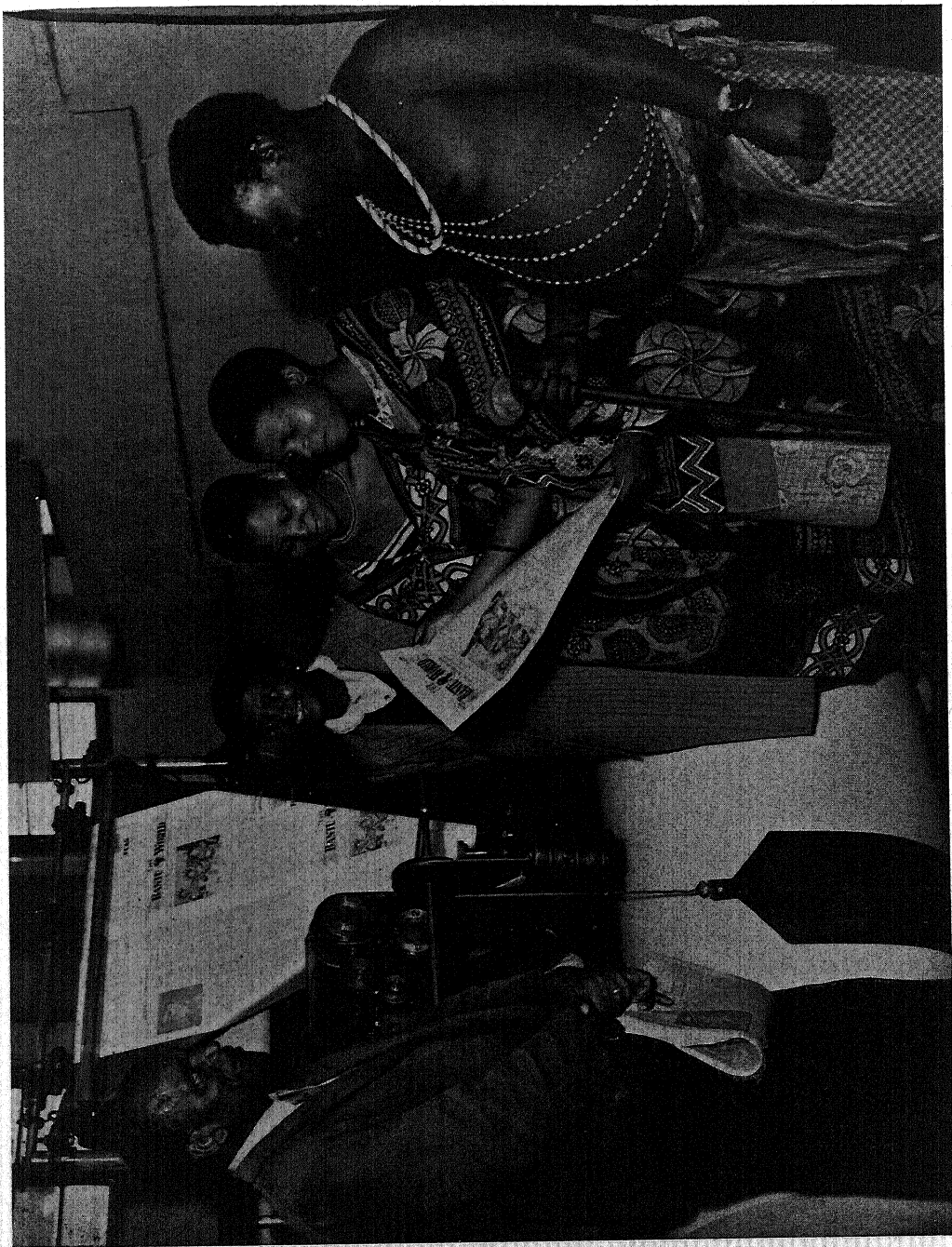


African carpenters making boxes for African miners who return to their homes in Native areas with a variety of manufactured goods.



With hundreds of thousands of men engaged in mining and industrial areas at great distances from their homes, the cultivation of tribal lands is largely in the hands of women.



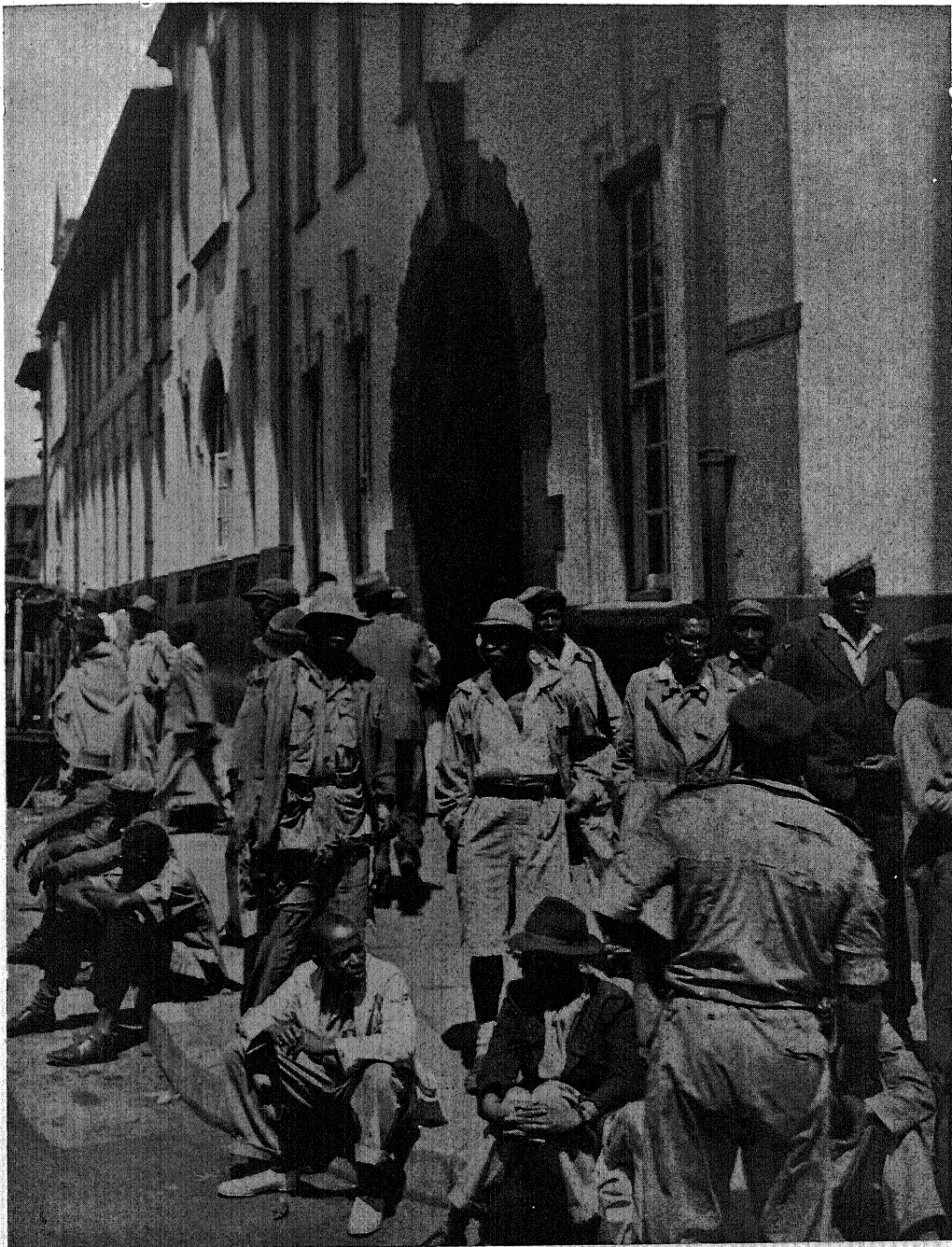


In the press room of a Bantu newspaper, the Editor, Mr. Seloape Thema, who is also a member of the Native Representative Council, presents a copy to two princesses, daughters of the Paramount Chief of Swaziland.



Africans leaving an electric suburban train. In a single generation these people are expected to step from the pace of the ox to the tempo of modern civilization, where time, speed and proficiency are the essence of progress.



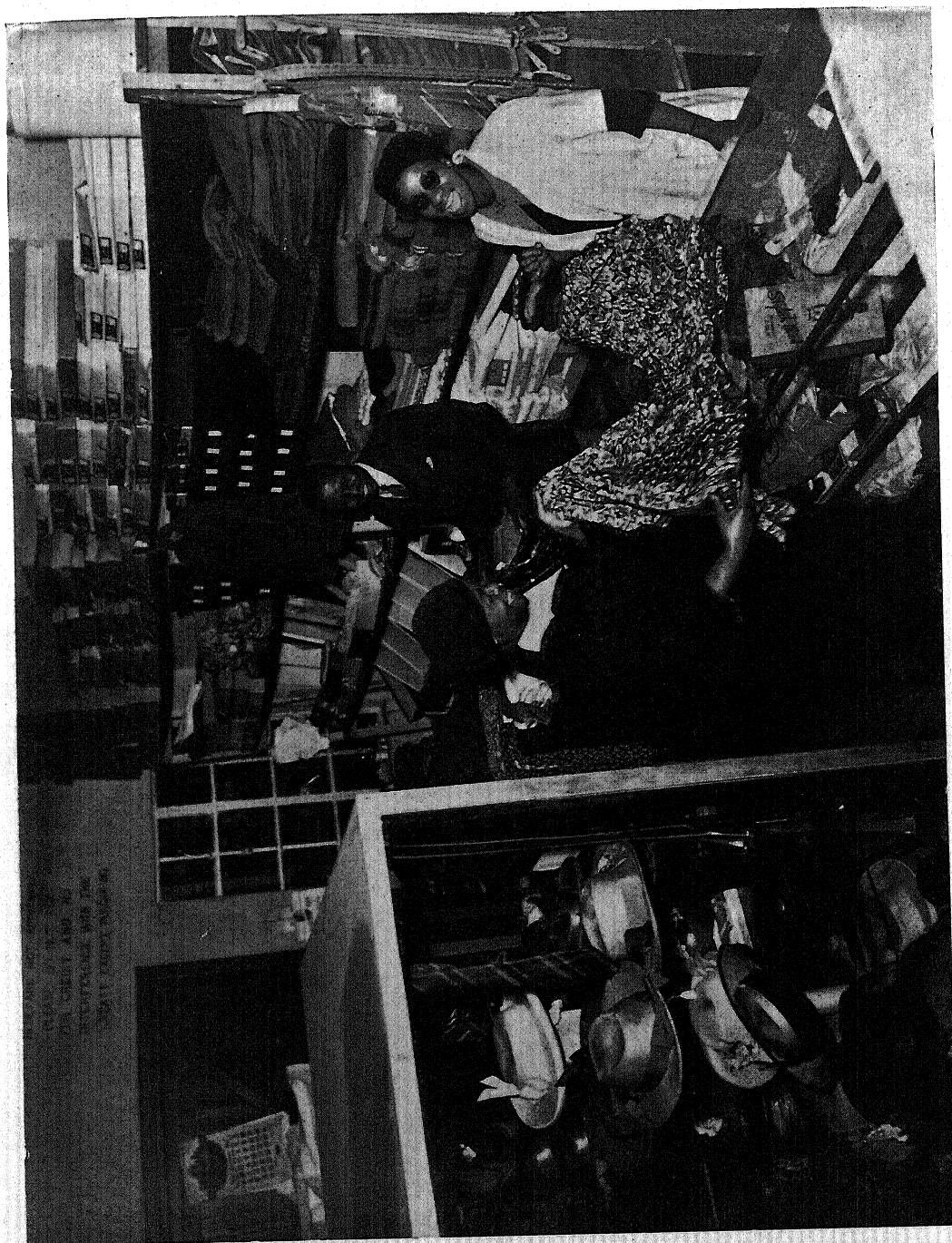


Millions of man-hours are spent annually at pass offices, registration centres and post office counters throughout South Africa. How many of us have been annoyed by the hours of absence entailed in the registration of the garden boy, cook or messenger? Are they to blame?



A country draper — Native trading store in the Northern Transvaal.





A draper's shop in an urban area.



A tailor's shop, where much of the work is patching and mending.





Grocers' shops designed to serve urban Africans reflect the change in the diet of the urbanised African, who is becoming more and more a purchaser of European foodstuffs.

## CHAPTER VI

### A BACKGROUND OF BLACK PEOPLE

MODERN economic developments by which the lives of White and Black have become so inextricably bound up in South Africa have created in many European quarters a certain mental background. The closeness and the frequency of the contacts, the very presence of so many Africans in towns and cities, on mines and on farms, has led to anxiety and disquiet. To many Europeans, life has come indeed to hold a black, a menacing, background.

Unhappily many people talk glibly about the 'Native Problem' (more correctly, the inter-racial problem) whose thinking is too shallow and uninformed to be true. Often the assertion is made in South Africa, 'I know the Native', by men whose contacts have been close enough in one or two phases, but who have no width of experience; who are 'at home' only when dealing with the raw, untutored African; who know nothing of the leaps made by the educated Bantu or of their capabilities or aspirations; and who do not see the South African situation as a segment of a world-wide set-up. Such people generally have only one panacea for any ills that the future may hold: it is 'to keep the Native in his place', which generally means keeping him as a servant and nothing more. Beyond these crude conceptions their thought seldom or never strays. They never ask what history teaches in these fundamental matters of race relationship. They never enquire whether there may not be a more excellent way.



It is indeed one of South Africa's misfortunes that its greatest problem is often dealt with in an environment fitted to be least helpful, and by people whose little learning is indeed a dangerous thing. Ideas are exchanged over tea-cups, in hotels and railway trains, and at bridge parties; and in the main the material for the conversations comes from the vagaries of domestic servants, the incivilities of the too often badgered and ignorant African, or the propaganda of anti-Native politicians. From such breeding-grounds come attitudes of contempt, and policies inspired by fear.

There is, however, another group of which we must take account. To many Europeans, more thoughtful and responsible, the presence in the land of another people so vastly superior in numbers gives rise to questioning. What if all Africans should become educated? What if they should come to have the power to rule? In such a case would the future of the White race in South Africa be worth a moment's purchase? They have a vague but benumbing fear for the future, especially as it may affect their descendants. They believe, and with reason, that Western civilization is a precious thing, and they feel it is in their keeping, so far as Southern Africa is concerned.

It was considerations such as these that led General Hertzog to introduce the Representation of Natives Bill in 1936, by which African voters of the Cape Province, who had been on a common register with Whites since 1854, were removed to a separate electoral roll. He made no secret of the fact that he was moved by fear, for he said: 'If there are two things which have always made the white population of South Africa very anxious, they are, firstly, the danger that there was of intermingling of blood, and, secondly, the danger that there was of being

dominated by the Natives.' He went on: 'If the Natives got the necessary education and the necessary schooling, they must eventually get the upper hand, if they only have the desire to take it. And no one can ever doubt it that when the Native gets that upper hand at the ballot box, he will not omit to use it in his own favour and will be able to dominate the Europeans.' According to General Hertzog, before such a fear even Christian principle must go down. He said:

It had been said that the Bill was in conflict with Christian principles. Christian principles meant a great deal to South Africans, and he hoped they would always mean a great deal to them. But there was an equally important principle—the principle of self-preservation—and on that principle Christianity was dependent. The safety of the White man in South Africa demanded that the rights of the Natives should be confined within reasonable limits.

In advocating such policies and in saying such things General Hertzog was representative of hosts of European South Africans, and nothing is to be gained by ignoring that fact. Nor can their arguments and fears be airily passed over. Along what lines do the answers to such questionings lie? It seems first that certain facts must be kept in view. One supreme fact is that South Africa is on the march. The simpler days when the vast majority of the Bantu people lived in the Reserves and had few contacts with Europeans have passed away. As we have seen, the majority of the Bantu are now outside the Reserves and in the employ of the White man. In addition to the farms and the mines, the country's primary and secondary industries have been calling for the Black man's labour, and never more so than to-day.

This insistent call in our time finds a ready response within the African's breast, because in him a process of

## A BACKGROUND OF BLACK PEOPLE

education has been going on for several generations — not merely the education given in schools under missionary care, but another of a different and, many would say, a much more influential kind. Every farmer who has engaged a Native labourer has begun a process of change. The raw African sees on the farm many desirable things — oxen, cows, milk galore, crops to keep him in abundance for a life-time, horses, a car to ride in, a house with many furnishings which his poor hut lacks. The African would be less than human if there did not spring up in him a desire to possess such things. The desire is followed by the question, How can they be got? And from there the educational process takes another step forward. The fact is, the merchant who employs a Native in his store, no matter in what capacity, the housewife who employs one in her home, the railways who employ them by the scores of thousands, the mine owners who send out their emissaries to the most remote and uncivilized kraals in order to bring men in the mass to the Rand and other mining centres, are all carrying both the European and the African people into a new day. We are all as busy as we can be — every White man and woman of us — educating the Natives by the work we demand of them and by our example. It is the road we have chosen, partly because the urge for progress in a young nation will not be frustrated, partly because our own convenience and comfort are helped thereby. It is noteworthy that many of those who fear the future for their children are among those who are content to accept the fact that through Black people's efforts they are able to enjoy the large leisure that comes to them, and in many instances even their very livelihood.

The years of war have hastened the developing process. It is claimed that during the first three years of the recent

war nearly as many Africans were drawn into South African industry as during the previous ten years. Such a process is likely to be speeded up. Nor can the effects of the war itself be overlooked. Africans to the number of 76,731 served in the Union Forces during the period 1st September 1939, to 30th April 1945. Of these, in round numbers, 1,200 lost their lives on active service, 880 were wounded, and 1,600 taken prisoner. Few gatherings have been more eloquent of the fact that Europeans and Africans have a common destiny in the Union than one that was held in Johannesburg in the latter half of 1945. Before several thousands of Europeans and Non-Europeans, including the Prime Minister, members of the Cabinet, Service chiefs and representatives of foreign governments, men and women of the fighting services, civilian protective services, nursing services, the Church and other organisations, His Excellency, the Officer Administering the Government, the Rt. Hon. N. J. de Wet, invested thirty-four members of the Cape Corps and the Native Military Corps with decorations won in action. In his address before presenting the medals, he said that the ceremony was the first of the kind ever to be held in South Africa for Non-European troops. It was more than a presentation of medals; it was an acknowledgment by the King and the Union Government of the loyal and valiant services rendered by all sections of the Non-European community. The record of the Non-European soldiers in the greatest of all wars had been a splendid one, he said. They served in all the branches of the naval, air and land forces and went wherever the Springboks were called on to serve. Their Roll of Honour was a noble one, their effort a valiant one. With the co-operation of the Non-European Army Services and the Non-Europeans generally, the Union's military forces



had attained a high place of honour among the Allied armies. General Smuts, also addressing the gathering, thanked the Non-European Army Services from his heart for the fine part they had played. They had earned their title to the things we had fought for. South Africa would never forget. In the greatest period of our history, all our people had stood together and shown the human stuff in us. The world had looked on and applauded. The Non-European peoples had the right to higher self-respect than ever before. General Smuts concluded: 'In the days of peace prove yourselves equally worthy. Lift up your heads; lift up your hearts; do in peace what you have done in war. Your people will be happier than ever before and South Africa will be a better country.'

These are significant events and declarations. From them the hands of the clock cannot be turned back.

There is another aspect. Even if she would, South Africa cannot afford to continue a system by which the greater part of its population lives in the fashion of primitive Africa. She cannot afford it economically. It is being borne in upon the Union that she is a poor country as modern countries go. Her citizens' minds have opened to the necessity for schemes of social security, a national system of health services and other features of a truly modern State. And with the realisation of such prime necessities has come the truth that South Africa cannot afford them while the productive capacity of her population remains at the low average of some £40 to £45 per head per annum. If she is to have what a modern nation needs, the producing powers of all her people must be raised, and that means education and training on twentieth century lines, especially for the backward Non-European masses.

Moreover, South Africa cannot profitably continue to have so large a portion of her population living in ignorance of hygienic ways. Even on the lowest ground, she cannot so continue, for the sake of the White minority. With modern means of communication as they are, it will sooner or later spell disaster for Europeans if they live alongside a backward people. It is now a trite saying that disease knows no colour bar. To have vast numbers in the same country living in disregard of the ordinary laws of cleanliness and health, is to lay up a store of trouble for a coming day. In time, probably through some sweeping epidemic, they will infect the whole. To ward off such a calamity more education of the many is necessary, and it also implies the higher education of the few, for the preventive and curative work that must be done among the Bantu can be done effectively only by men and women of their own race. In any case, it cannot be imagined that all the diseases of all Africa can be treated by Europeans. Nothing is more fitting than that the African doctor and nurse should be in the forefront of the fight for health and higher living standards.

The lines of development, actual and potential, which we have mentioned all involve more education for Africans as a body. But it is just this advance in education that inspires Europeans with fear. How far is this fear rational? It may be suggested, with all respect, that many of those who live in anxiety for the future are barren of ideas on how to handle the situation and often are inconsistent in their attitudes. They would fain keep the Black man as he is, while inconsistently they demand his labour and shut their eyes to the fact that they are aiding the mighty forces which are beating upon him, and carrying him far beyond the life of previous centuries and even of

the present. They fail, also, to read the lesson of history that no virile people can be kept down indefinitely by force. They tremble for the future of their children because of the coming competition of the Black man. They do not see that there is probably more cause to tremble if an overwhelming number of South Africa's population grows up sullen, discontented and rebellious. To have outnumbering millions constantly in that condition is to live on the edge of a volcano which at any time may burst into flame. And it cannot be forgotten that behind the African in this country stand ultimately all the coloured races of the world.

Let it be candidly admitted that, whatever way is taken, the future of South Africa cannot be smooth and easy. But it does seem that the only road along which life is to be tolerable is the road of mutual understanding and identity of interest. Fortunately, there is on both sides of the colour line true racial pride enough to avoid the dangers of intermarriage. Almost without exception, it is in the lowest strata of both races that miscegenation is to be found. But while each race maintains its pride of race, surely both may learn to prize the one civilization into which they must fit and find their common life. If that civilization means to the Black man mostly pass laws, colour bar, segregation, differential law and other instruments of restriction and frustration, it cannot be expected that they will be happy and co-operative. But if it means a larger, fuller life into which they enter as they advance in education and cultured ways, the future, whatever its difficulties, is not without hope.

Many of the arguments used in South Africa to-day against giving Africans any political or economic rights are typical of the arguments in Great Britain a century ago about giving large sections of the common people any

higher or more influential place. The blunder of a century ago was failure to see that men of different types living in one land can have identity of interests, if no artificial barriers are raised against their progress. Universal franchise among a free and educated people, with equality before the law, have revealed that divisions or similarities of political view are not according to man's rank or wealth or race. Where people are treated alike they do not divide as communities or even as races, but they develop a community of interest and of patriotism which wears well in the common day and even more in days of crisis. It is one of the lessons of South African history that the various sections of the Bantu have combined against the White man only when the latter's policy appeared unnecessarily restrictive, when, in short, he had departed from his own ideals of justice and fairplay. It is not without significance that a growing number of Africans see how in Western civilization at its best there is a heritage which must be defended. As a true interpreter of the African mind few can equal the late Father Callaway of St. Cuthbert's. In one of his books he gives a revealing glimpse of an African's thought on the value of White civilization. Father Callaway had been disturbed by the rudeness of a representative of the White race who had treated an African clergyman with scant courtesy, and he expressed his indignation to the latter and his sense of shame. But the African replied: 'Father, the White man has got a great treasure in the refinement of his social life and it is only natural that he should guard it jealously.'

Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr has pointed out in what terms the late President Brand of the Orange Free State gave counsel to his friend President Kruger, when the latter was troubled by the growing number of the Uitlanders

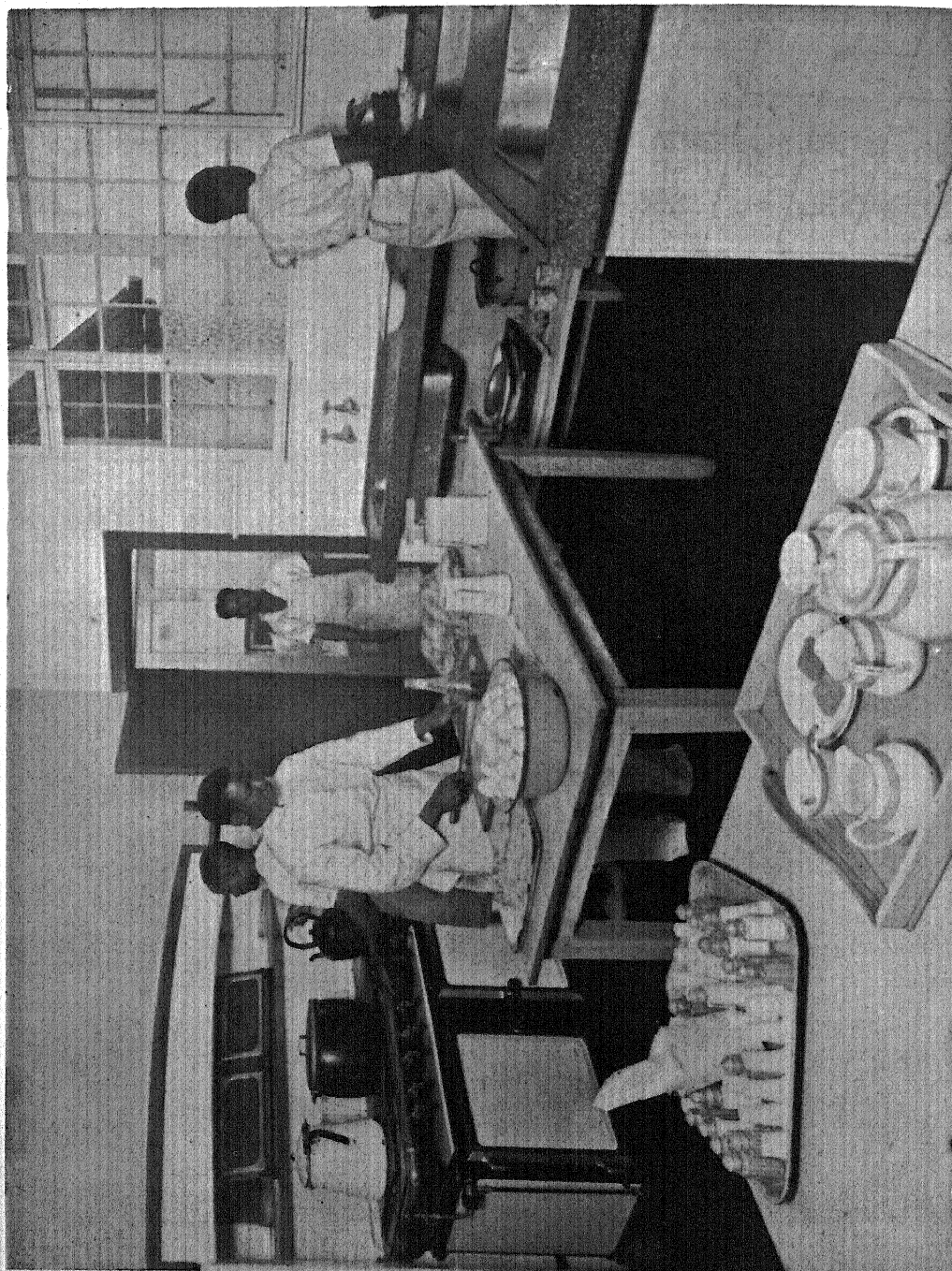


(foreigners), who threatened to overwhelm his Republic of the Transvaal. Kruger was given the sage advice, 'Make them your friends.' Mr. Hofmeyr added:

That advice might also in part have appositely been given, might still be given, to those who were and are fearful as to the White man's future in this land. . . . A wise Greek once said that if you don't destroy your enemy, you must make him your friend. There can be no solution of what we Europeans call the Native problem unless we (for it is with us that the initiative lies) succeed in ensuring that the Native people of this land do regard us as their friends.

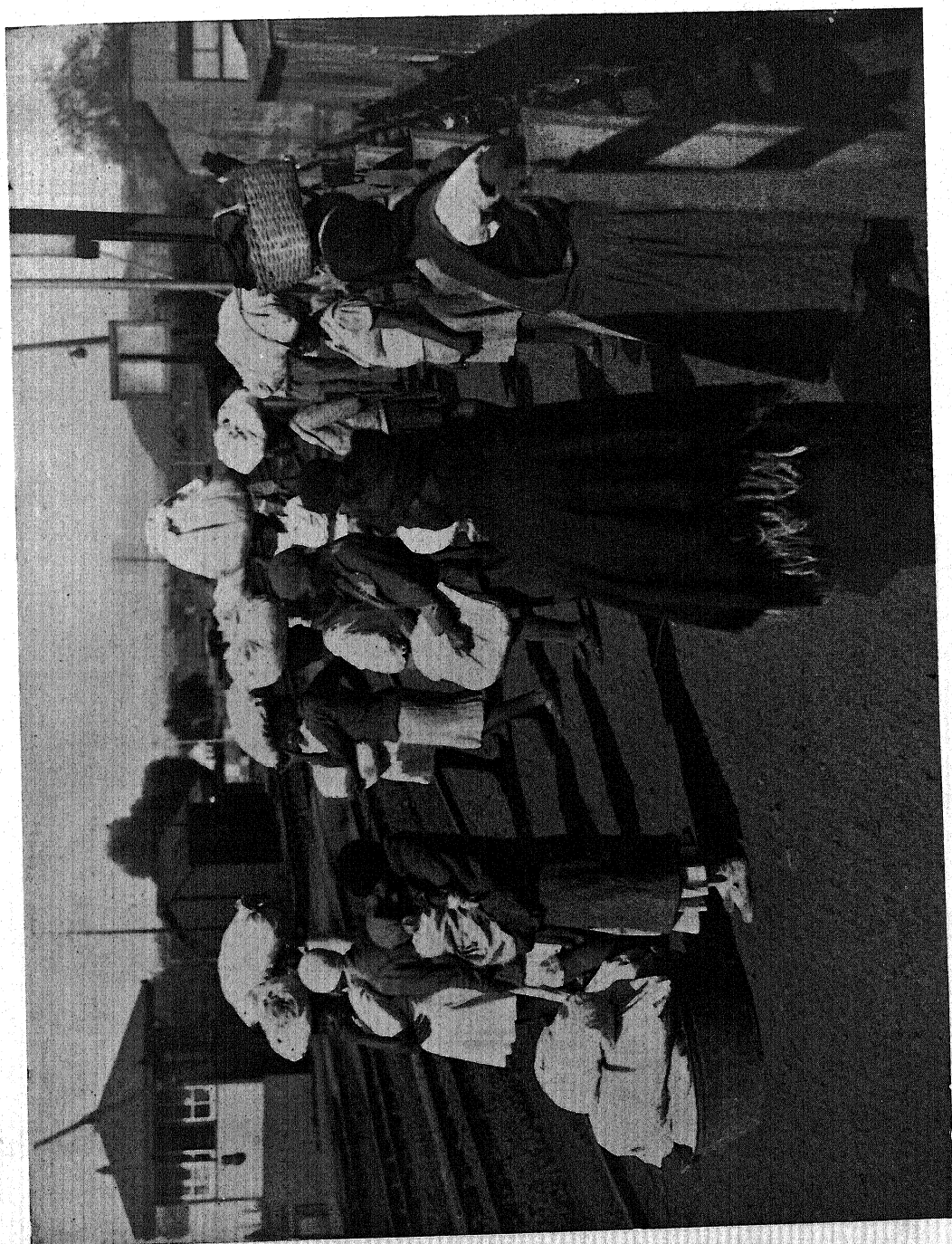
In short, the only antidote to fear on racial affairs in our dear land is to pursue after a Christian solution: in these high matters to do justly and love mercy, believing that what is morally good can never be politically evil; believing that, as in so much else, the way of Christ is to be trusted for the end it brings.

If that seems a walking by faith, it may be answered that any other solution, with force at its heart, is a walking by sight — to an end that even the bravest may tremble to behold.

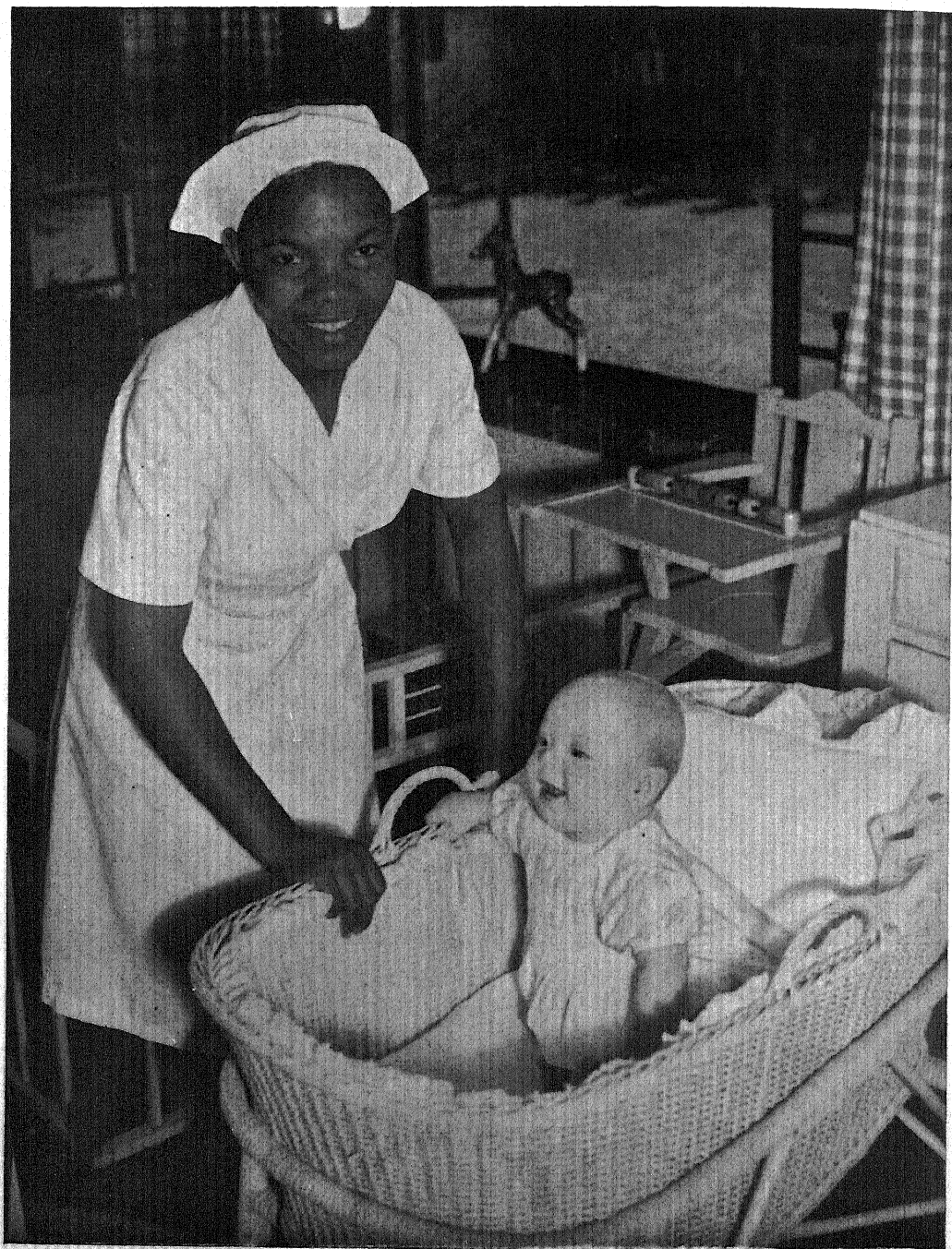


In the homes of ninety per cent. of South Africa's European population,  
Natives prepare and serve the meals.



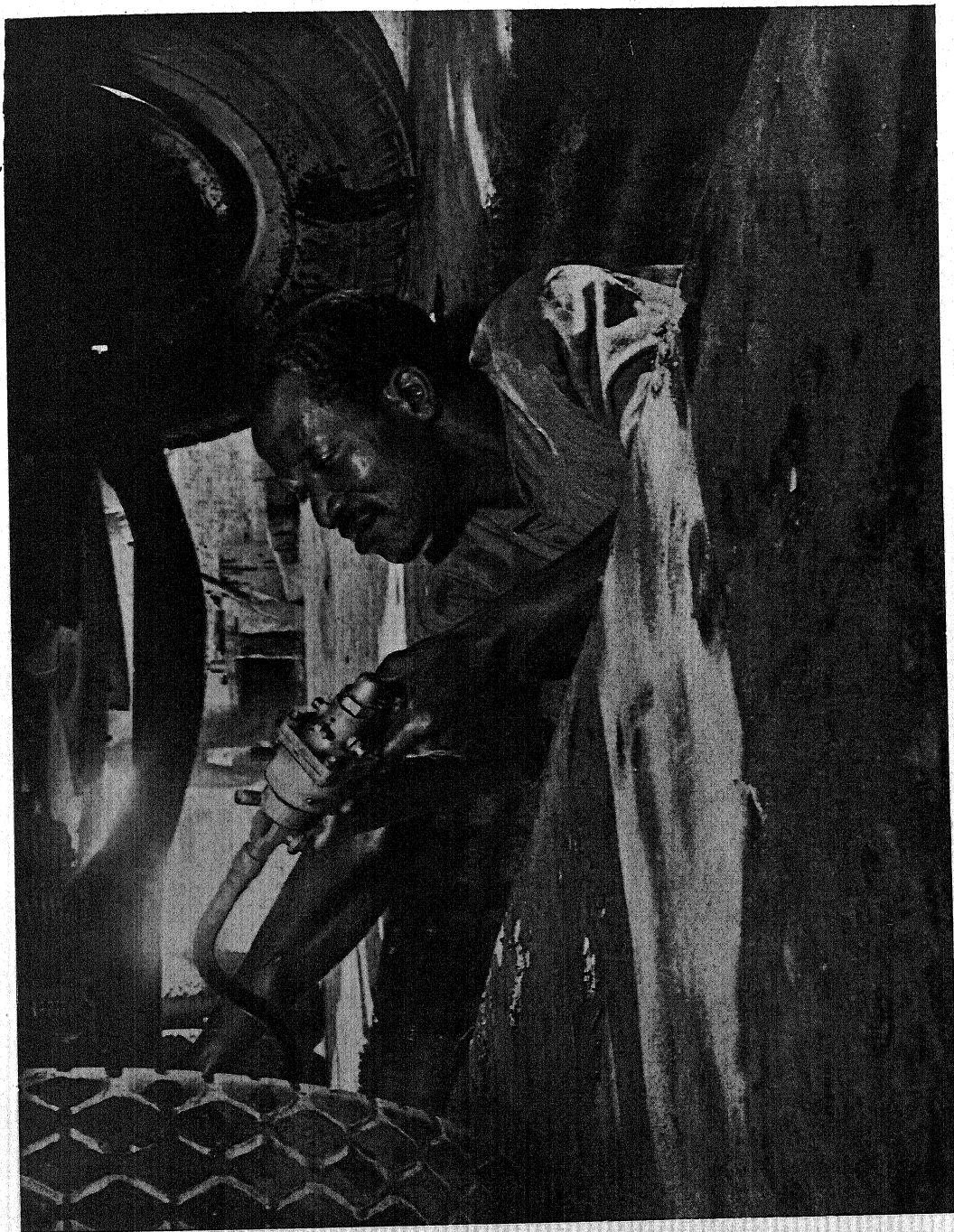


Throughout South Africa commercial laundries do the work for only one family in a hundred; for the remaining ninety-nine it is usually done by African women who are here seen carrying bundles of washing.



Only one European child in a thousand has a European 'Nanny'.





Just greasing a car. Eighty years ago Livingstone was lost in darkest Africa. To-day we take for granted a thousand and one tasks performed by Africans for our safety and comfort.

## CHAPTER VII

### PEOPLE ARE NOT STATISTICS

MODERN LIFE has made us all the hourly companions of statistics. The astronomical figures of a world-war have been placed before us in numerous publications. No one nowadays writes on any social, economic or political subject without piling the statistics up. Indeed the more tables that a thesis contains the more impressive to many does it appear to be.

No one in his senses would question the value of statistics in dealing with social and political matters. To exchange ideas on the food supplies of UNRRA or on war debts or the speed of planes, figures are necessary coinage.

At the same time it may be questioned whether the idea is not being overdone, particularly in the social sphere. We produce statistics on some social problem, and when we have done so we mistakenly feel that something by way of remedy has been effected.

This tendency is evident in the treatment of Native Affairs in South Africa. As we have mentioned, book after book, article after article, are being produced on diverse aspects of the African's life, many of them of a highly technical and statistical nature. There is the danger that when some readers have mastered these publications or even simply read them, they may be satisfied that something has been accomplished for the bettering of conditions. Yet it may be only a lazy man's way of salving his conscience. Nothing tangible is wrought out

## PEOPLE ARE NOT STATISTICS

unless these figures are the starting-point of a definite course of remedial action.

On other readers such statistics produce no real impression. They do not possess a good memory for figures and consequently forget or even mistrust them, for when they are not remembered clearly the message or idea they are designed to carry becomes blurred. Certainly, after the avalanche of figures produced by the world-war, most people are tired of statistics and have become blasé concerning them.

In short, there is considerable danger that in our time many of the facts of life pass before us under a camouflage of numbers.

As an instance we may cite the statement that an infantile mortality of 400 per thousand is found in a certain Native location. We may read the figure, and yet the impression is so superficial that it does not bring home to us the death of a single little child.

More and more we require to remind ourselves, particularly as we deal with African affairs, that people are not statistics. We need more of the human approach.

The late Colonel Deney's Reitz shocked South Africans when he pointed out that in the three Northern Provinces 348,907 arrests were made for contraventions of the Pass Laws in the three years 1939, 1940 and 1941, and in 318,858 of these cases convictions followed. But even Colonel Reitz's eloquence and indignation probably conveyed little of the individual misery that these arrests involved. What did it mean in the case of man after man? Here is an individual making, it may be, his first contact with Johannesburg or some other northern city or town. For him, life has hitherto consisted of days passed in an upland territory, where the commonest sights and sounds were

those of rural nature. As he walks in the streets, probably conveying by every look and gesture that he is country-bred, he finds himself confronted by an African or European policeman who demands his pass. He is at once anxious and confused. Failing for some reason to produce the needed paper—in some circumstances no fewer than six papers may be required of such a novice in city ways—he is marched off to gaol. He has committed only a technical offence, but, according to the law, in his case it is a criminal offence, and in many such instances the culprit is, from the first, herded in gaol with criminals. A day or two goes by and he makes his appearance in a crowded police court, where there follows a speedy conviction, sentence of fine or imprisonment, days in custody. Statistics of such things convey little to us if we do not follow in imagination one individual through his feelings of confusion, his helplessness, his misery, his bitterness, and finally, as it may well be, his degradation. And when we have done all that and multiplied the instance by scores, and even hundreds of thousands, our understanding may be opened.

Sometimes our morning newspaper contains a heading such as: POLICE RAID IN JOHANNESBURG: 200 SUSPECTS ARRESTED: 3,000 GALLONS OF LIQUOR DESTROYED. Do we imaginatively picture what such an incident means? True, there are Skokiaan queens who are making a rich harvest of gain from their illicit trade and who deserve to be caught and hardly dealt with. But what of others ?

Here is the transcript of an authentic story of an African country woman who was caught in one of these raids:

She had known the hardness and bareness of life. The little homestead at which she was born consisted of



only one hut and a 'kitchen' or store-hut. Before these stood a small enclosure composed of wattle branches, in which both cattle and sheep were folded, for of animals the family possessed but few.

As long as memory went back she saw herself as a child spending her days looking after a brother slightly younger than herself; gathering little bundles of firewood up on the hillside; fetching water from the stream two miles away, first in small pitchers but later in pails which increased in size as she grew up; or standing at the side of a field from dawn to dusk, scaring birds from the ripening crops. Her attendance at school was only fitful. Yet it served to give her the power of writing a simple letter in her own vernacular tongue.

When she was a young woman, Reuben came to request her parents for their daughter's hand. The prospect was pleasing. The bride-price paid meant that more stock stood in the cattle-kraal than it had ever known, but, though the wedding was a simple affair in the little mud-walled church, its consequent load of debt at the trader's store, incurred to meet the cost of the wedding-clothes and the marriage feast, was such as to keep her father awake at nights.

Children quickly followed each other. To the disappointment of herself and her relatives, all the first four were daughters. When the fourth was born, a visiting neighbour, with a burst of English, exclaimed, 'Am sorry'. And 'Am Sorry' became the child's name. With a growing family and an inelastic field, Reuben's absences at the mines became more frequent and longer. At last he proposed that she should follow him to the Rand. Three of the children had died, and so with 'Am Sorry' Martha set out on the great adventure of making her way north.

From the first she was miserable amid city ways. Life at home was bare, but there were the familiar fields, the hills and the simple round among neighbours not unkind. How different it all was from the crowded backyard slum in which dozens of all sorts were herded together and where every man's hand seemed against another. The climax came when one evening, as she sat in a neighbour's house, the police entered and arrested all who were present on a charge of selling or buying illicit liquor. The day or two in prison brought to finality the purpose that had been growing. She would stay in the city no longer but seek again the hills of home. How she managed the journey back she could never say. But one day she staggered into her father's village more dead than alive.

Years after, she still trembled when a policeman appeared on her path, whether on horse or on foot.

It is common knowledge that some of the Native townships of Johannesburg are ten miles or more from the centre of the city where many of the African people work. What does that low-denomination figure 'ten' convey? Do we see thousands of individual men and women come in by train, packed tight in the compartments, every morning, and returning every night? Do we calculate the large deduction made from their scanty weekly wage by the cost of the ticket that makes such conveyance possible? Or have we seen the queues lined up long after 7 p.m. on Johannesburg streets as African men and women wait to avail themselves of the buses that seem so few and far between? Or do we see the hundreds who resort to bicycles, travelling ten miles in this fashion before the day's work begins, and struggling ten miles back at night, often through torrential rain, which soaks the few clothes they possess?

## PEOPLE ARE NOT STATISTICS

People are not statistics. They are human beings with human problems, human histories and desires. It is to this human standpoint that we must bring ourselves again and yet again.

Perhaps no single incident did more for the abolition of slavery in the United States than when Abraham Lincoln as a young man visiting Orleans, watched the transactions in a slave market. As he looked at the individuals some of them women, being put up where their physical proportions could be appraised and saw them bought and sold, the thought of what it meant to them individually rushed upon his spirit. Inwardly he vowed, 'If ever I have the power to hit this thing, by God I will hit it hard.'

Pamphleteering about the rights and wrongs of Abolition was, in the early part of last century, a feature of American public life. These pamphlets, no doubt, had their influence, but how feeble they seem as compared with the force let loose when Harriet Beecher Stowe depicted the sufferings of one poor Negro, 'Uncle Tom.'

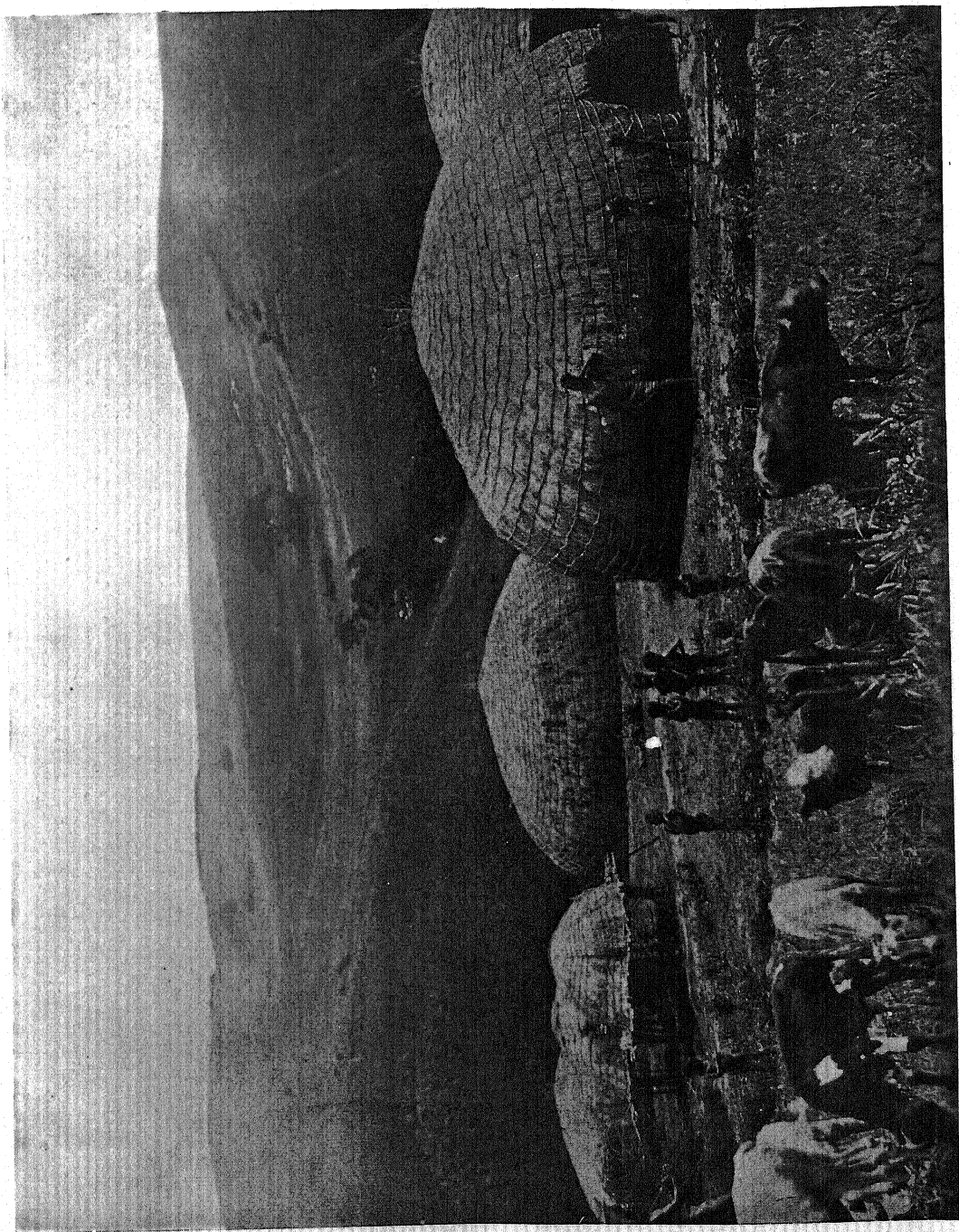
As we have indicated, in South Africa we have had our statistical and technical literature on the 'Native problem,' and such literature is growing every year. It has its value. But there is the danger that to some it may prove an opiate. Not least is this seen in some academic circles where a tendency to luxuriate among South Africa's racial problems is not always avoided. To theorize, to pile up figures, to air knowledge, to sharpen ability in order to coin catch phrases, to harp on the disabilities of the man of colour, to make these things subject for debate—that may have a fatal fascination leading away from reality, and instilling a belief that much more is being accomplished than is actually the case. Or this interminable debate may leave the impression that

## AFRICAN CONTRASTS

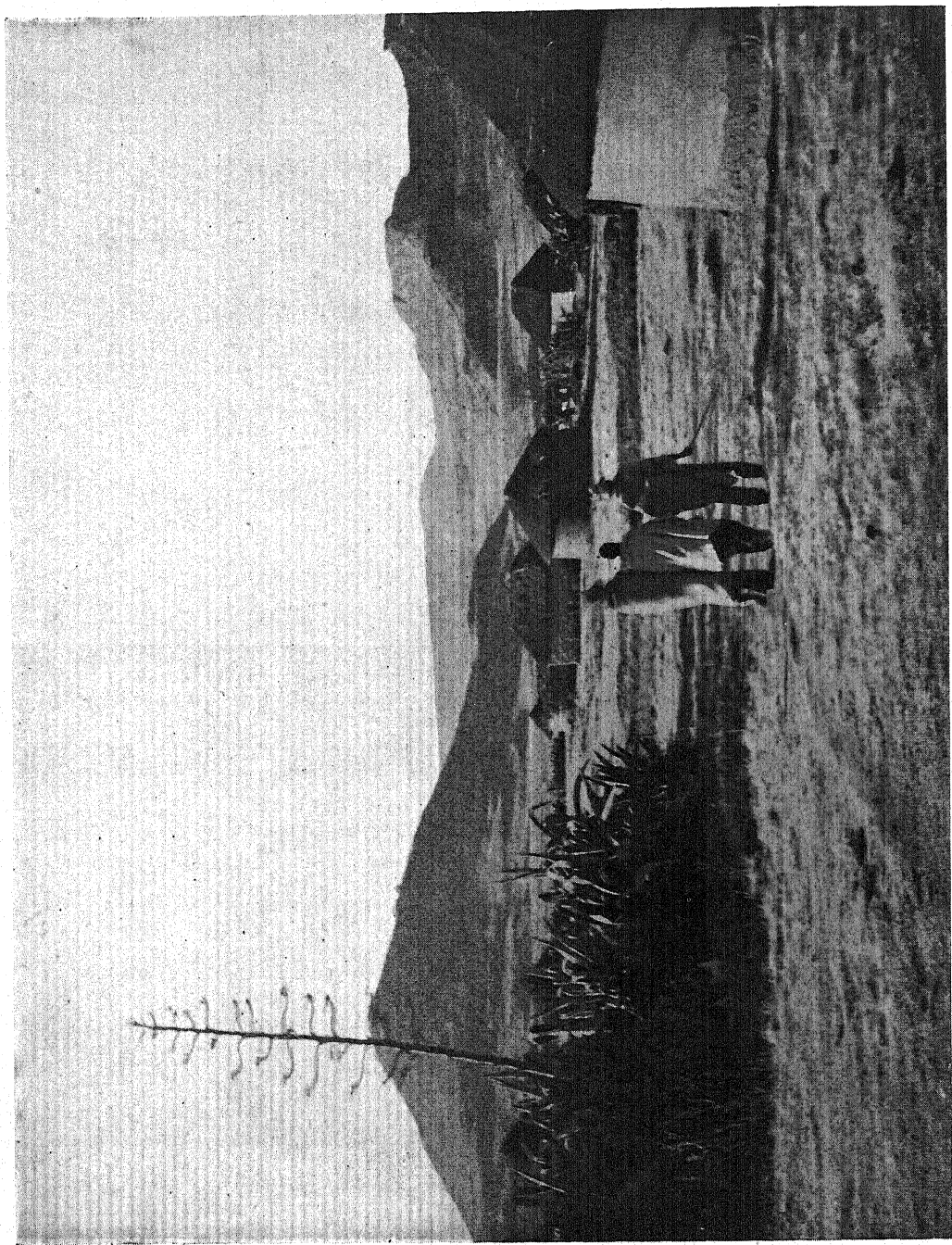
there is no solution: the problem has become too complex, too wide in its ramifications in the political, economic and social spheres for any unravelling.

Yet the outlook might change if we could only 'sit where the Black man sits': if we could see how the difficulties of Africans would strike us were we in their places; if we could realise that we are largely responsible for what happens to the Africans. We would find our outlook changing if we would exercise our imaginations and our feelings for fellow human beings.



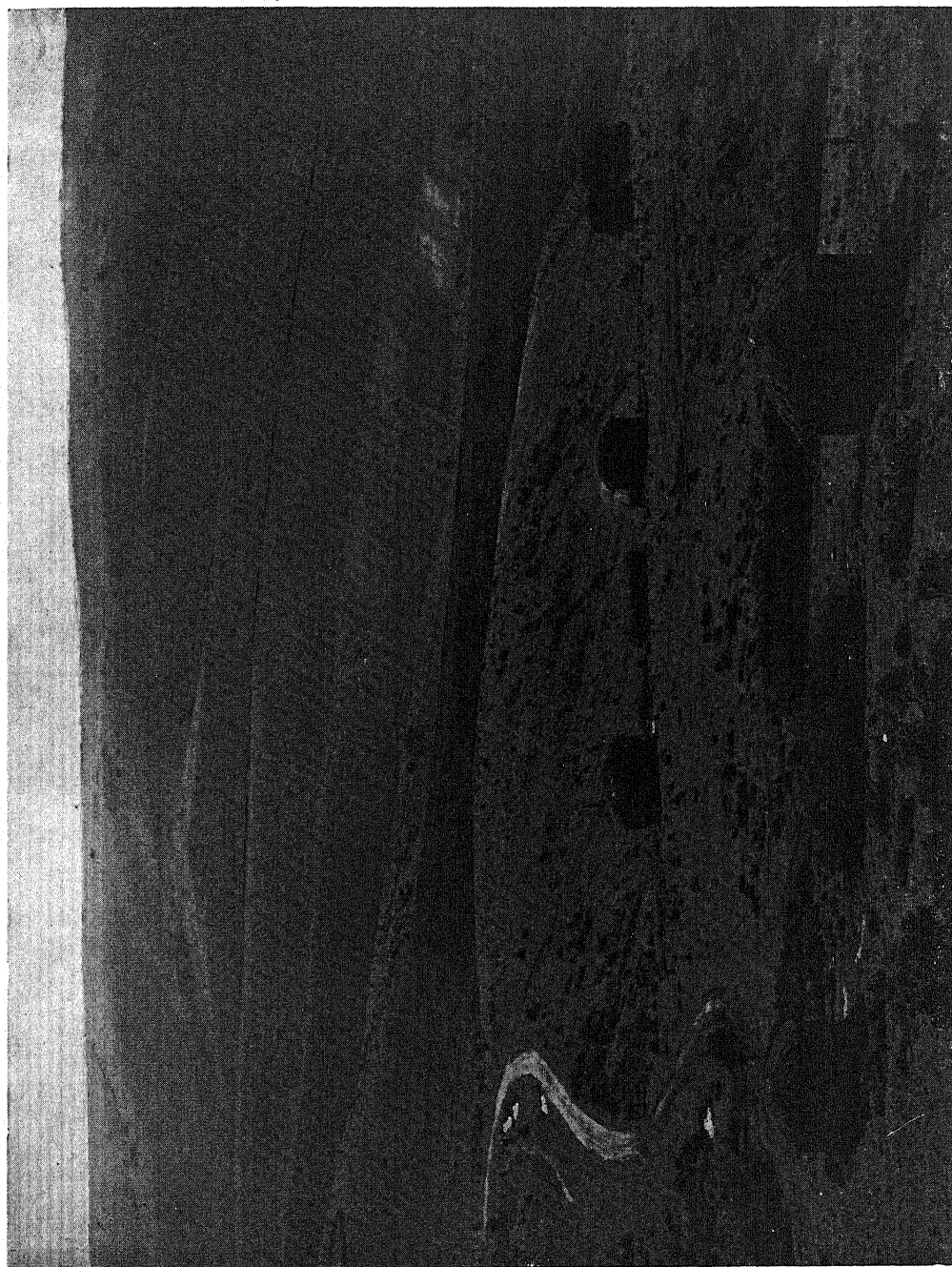


Beehive huts and the rich pasturage of Natal's coastal belt among the hills and valleys of the Zulus' traditional home.

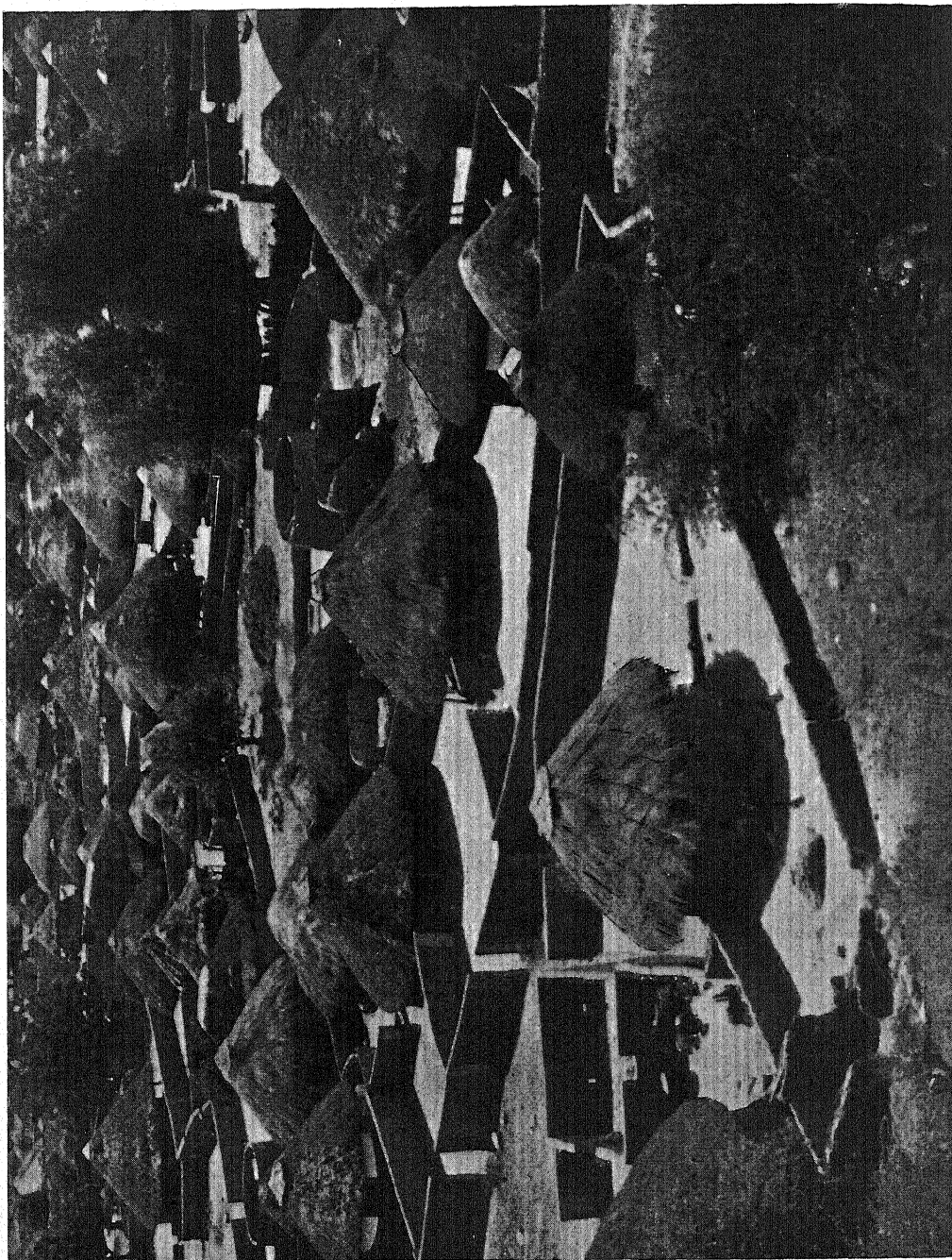


Steep and stony foothills of the Basutoland mountains and the circular and rectangular homes of the Basuto.





Wide, rolling downs of the Transkei, Cape Province, and the low-pitched and distinctively-thatched huts of the Xhosa.



The great villages and clean courtyards of the people of Bechuanaland.



## CHAPTER VIII

### HOME-LIFE IN ITS EXTREMES

THE BANTU are a home-loving, house-proud people. No word is more pleasant to their ears than the word for home (*ikhaya* in some of their languages). Ask a class of pupils at some Native secondary school to write an essay on their respective homes, and you will be surprised at the glowing picture they give. It is not that they intend to deceive or that ambition has led them to fantasy: it is simply that the picture of home warms their hearts. If a Bantu man falls sick far from home, his one desire is to be again among the familiar scenes. If individual histories could be known, it would be found that South Africa has been the scene of countless individual treks by dying African men seeking, many of them vainly, to spend their last days at the spot that is dearest to them on earth, and to ensure that their bones would be laid in its soil. This is an aspect not sufficiently known to those of the White race.

To one familiar with civilized life the African homestead seems often a bare place, and the thought comes, how could anything so drab inspire such feelings of fondness? But the African is like all other human folk in that for him, as for them, it is not furnishings that make a home. Among the poorest of Western lands we find a like affection, though home may be in a slum. It is the bonds of kith and kin, the sharing of life together, and the associations gathered by the years that give richness to the word 'home'. Again, when confronted with poverty in an African home, we must remember that it may be poor in furnishings but yet the family be rich in animal stock, which to them is

the supremely desirable form of wealth. Where real poverty does exist, in viewing it it is well to recall that poverty is a relative thing. Among the poor there are gradations of poverty, and few are unable to find others poorer than themselves: it is not themselves but those others who are to them 'the poor'.

The pagan home in the Native territories has few furnishings and these are all utilitarian: beer pots, grinding stones, sleeping mats, calabashes, a grain basket, a bucket of water, sickles, hoes, milk buckets, blankets, a chest, spoons, and wooden pillows — these make up the contents of a well-furnished home. But this homestead, with its few ornaments, has a well-ordered life. As we have seen in a former chapter, the huts of the homestead are arranged according to the status of the occupants and by age-long custom. In each hut there are definite places where the owner sits, where other men sit, and where women and children sit. Each household, too, consisting of a woman and her children, possesses its own cattle, has the right to till certain fields, and is provided for by certain well-defined customs. Moreover, inheritance rights are all clearly known. In every tribe there is a well-established code by which the rights of property are secured.

Admittedly, at the pagan, primitive village there is much that is far from the Christian standard. There are customs connected with sex and marriage that cannot be conformed to Christian ways. Through witchcraft there is fear that broods and is seldom lifted. There is a lack of privacy that is the enemy of Christian refinement. More than sixty years ago, Dr. Jane Waterson, one of the ablest women that ever worked among the Bantu, declared:

The first thing that will raise the Native social level a little will be the square houses divided into rooms. The public dressings

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that I have seen by the road at times, say on Sacrament Sundays, would not be seen if women were not accustomed to the public dressing and undressing of the round hut. It utterly prevents the growth of refinement and delicacy without which you can never have an educated woman.

In the primitive village also there are hygienic deficiencies which cause unnecessary physical suffering and great loss of life.

Still — and this is the point we would make — it is an ordered life. It has its definite laws and customs, so that men and women are never at a loss as to what ought to be done. It has also its freedom and spaciousness. Huts are built with ample distance one from the other. All around there stretches the wide veld, with its pasture lands and fields. Frequently, not far off are the sentinel mountains. Life has, and feels it has, its open spaces. It is lived close to nature: flocks and herds, ploughing and reaping, dawn and sunset, summer and winter, eating and sleeping, birth, marriage, death — these great simplicities make up existence.

In no way perhaps has Western civilization come with such crashing, revolutionary effects as on the life of the Bantu home. The home-life of the majority of urban Africans falls far short of all that is best as judged either by their standards or ours.

If one passes through South Africa with observant eyes, there is bound to be a feeling of shock at the conditions under which many Africans are housed. One obvious fact is that the housing of Native railway servants, as observed from railway trains, is palpably discreditable to a civilized land. Fortunately, in this sphere there are clear indications of improvement. But similar strictures can be passed on the housing conditions of most Natives employed in towns.

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Attached to each town or city is land, more or less extensive, on which the houses of the Africans connected with the towns are built. Under the policy of segregation, the Native people are kept separate from the European inhabitants. These town locations, as they are called, have been built largely on the assumption that the dwellers in them are temporary residents of the town, with houses in the Reserves to which they return from time to time. Thus almost invariably there is no freehold tenure of land on which a man may build a house with the expectation that it will be his permanent home. Yet the fact remains that many of these African town-dwellers, like their European counterparts, are residents who have grown up in the towns, have no foothold in the Reserves, and no other home.

Many of the locations are the drabest of affairs. The influx of the Bantu to the towns, though drawn there by the White man's call for labour, caught South Africa unprepared. The locations bear every mark of poverty, of cheapness of material, of lack of comfort and planning. Frequently they are devoid of any attempt at beauty or of the amenities associated with urban dwellings. Tumbledown hovels of all sorts and sizes are huddled together, on the edges of unpaved streets, with sanitary conveniences few and primitive, and the whole township quite unlighted after dark. The houses, so often made of wood and iron with few inside walls of brick, feel like ovens in the heat of summer and like ice-chests in the cold of winter.

In recent years attempts have been made, particularly in the larger centres, to rectify the situation by building townships with more adequate dwellings and amenities. The new plans often have their disadvantages to the African dwellers. Under pressure from European trade



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unions the houses are generally built with costly European labour, and so the rents charged are often out of all proportion to the tenants' ability to pay. The rents indeed may take fifteen per cent. to twenty-five per cent. of a labourer's income. Far more enlightened has been the policy of a centre like Bloemfontein where for long the location dwellers have been allowed to build their own houses, provided they conform to certain requirements as to dimensions and material, while loans for the purchase of the latter have been made available from municipal funds.

The locations vary greatly in size. Some hold only a few hundred people, while others are of enormous dimensions. Orlando, near Johannesburg, has already a population of 70,000 and is expected to grow to 120,000 within 10 years.

Life in an urban township, especially in the larger centres, is vastly different from life in rural parts. The African brings his African nature into a European milieu. The values are those of the European. There is indeed a groping for home-life moulded on Western lines. The qualities that tell in the Reserves — wisdom in the councils of the tribe, knowledge of Native law and custom, faithfulness to tradition and chief — count for little here. Any African rule that may be exercised is through Location Advisory Boards, elected mostly on a democratic basis, by which too often the loud-voiced and easy-promisers find pride of place.

The economic system is the system of the Europeans — cash wages, in place of a subsistence economy. The unversed find in the system many a snare. It is a new thing to pay out money for everything, even to paying a weekly or monthly sum for a dwelling — a demand unheard of in rural parts. Leisurely African ways of cooking must

be abandoned: under the new conditions of employment, with its long and regular hours, food must be ready quickly; much of it indeed is bought prepared for eating — bread, meat, tinned foods, etc. Even the old familiar way of making beer may be prohibited, so that if made it must be done furtively and hurriedly; results are often accelerated by its being mixed with European spirits, followed frequently by disaster to all concerned.

The economic burden is often a crushing one, owing to the low wages given to African labouring folk. Thus a decent home-life is rendered difficult. In 1940 a careful investigation was made of the circumstances of nine hundred and eighty-seven families in three Johannesburg townships. It was found that forty-five per cent. of the women went to work, leaving their children at home. Yet the average monthly income of the nine hundred and eighty-seven families was £5 6s. 8d., while the average expenditure was £5 11s. The deficit was often made up by illicit means or debt.

To some Africans of character the most objectionable feature of life in the town locations is the herding together of all kinds. The family and clanship settlements of the Reserves, and the wide spaces ensured by fields and pasture lands, have gone. Those who seek to live in wholesome ways find often as their neighbours those who keep dirty houses, live loose lives and earn their living by illicit methods. There is no sense of privacy or separation from evil. The rearing of children in such an environment is often fraught with anxiety for those who would maintain the standards of tribe or church.

A feature of urban life which has been causing twinges of conscience to many White South Africans is the housing of mine labourers in compounds. The migratory labour

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system causes scores of thousands of men to be away from their homes for many months at a time and to live, divorced from family life, in large compounds. The system is an unnatural one and is responsible for much deterioration of family life in the Reserves and of moral life among the men involved. Concerning the new gold fields being opened in the Orange Free State there is in many quarters a demand that the compound system have no place, but that provision be made for normal family life.

When all the disadvantages of urban life have been passed in review, it yet must be acknowledged that for thousands of Africans in our time, as a matter of taste as well as of necessity, town life is the only bearable life. Urban ways have laid their spell upon them. For them the country means dullness and want. They think ruefully of the rural daily round, with none of the gaieties of concert or dance-hall, of the scanty food taken from the worn-out earth, and of droughts that carry off all the Africans' possessions and force them to try to sleep in order to forget their hunger. They have made their choice, and so they seek to conform to European urban ways. To enter their homes is to find often praiseworthy and pathetic attempts to reach the new standards on the means they possess. As in so much else, it is frequently Victorian fashions that are copied. The furniture, cast out by Europeans because outmoded in style, has been procured from second-hand dealers. Horse-hair chairs, plush table-covers, white lace curtains and elaborate bed-hangings are all to the fore. The walls display oleographs, generally religious in subject and often of a hideous type, or family photographs, or, it may be, simply pictures taken from magazines. European health customs, like keeping windows

open, find favour with the more advanced. A gramophone or a wireless set may ensure contact with the wider world.

The fact is, though White South Africa is often strangely blind to the truth, through the impact of Western civilization, especially on its economic side, Africans by the thousand are now indissolubly wedded to European household customs. For them there is no going back. They are town-bred, and in its ways their children will follow them. Their needs can only be satisfied by the recognition that for them the old Africa is dead.

South Africa's duty is to provide them with the best conditions that modern means can supply. Fortunately, in this regard an outstanding example has been given of what may be accomplished. One city has tackled the matter with understanding, thoroughness and vision. In McNamee township in Port Elizabeth the attempt has been made to provide the African population with satisfactory dwellings in a pleasing environment. Not many years ago there was attached to Port Elizabeth the township of Korsten, 'the worst slum in the world', as a notable public servant of South Africa declared. That township had grown, without foresight or planning, until 22,000 Europeans, Coloureds and Africans were living in conditions of dirt and degradation, and in dwellings unfit for human habitation. The majority of the rack-renting landlords were Africans. Some ten years ago Port Elizabeth adopted a re-housing scheme to cost one-and-a-half million pounds. The Government gave a loan of the amount at three-quarter per cent. interest. (It deserves to be mentioned that similar loans amounting to £13,000,000 had been given to municipalities when the war of 1939 broke out.) Port Elizabeth set itself to build 'economic houses for sub-economic wage earners'. The result is that in place



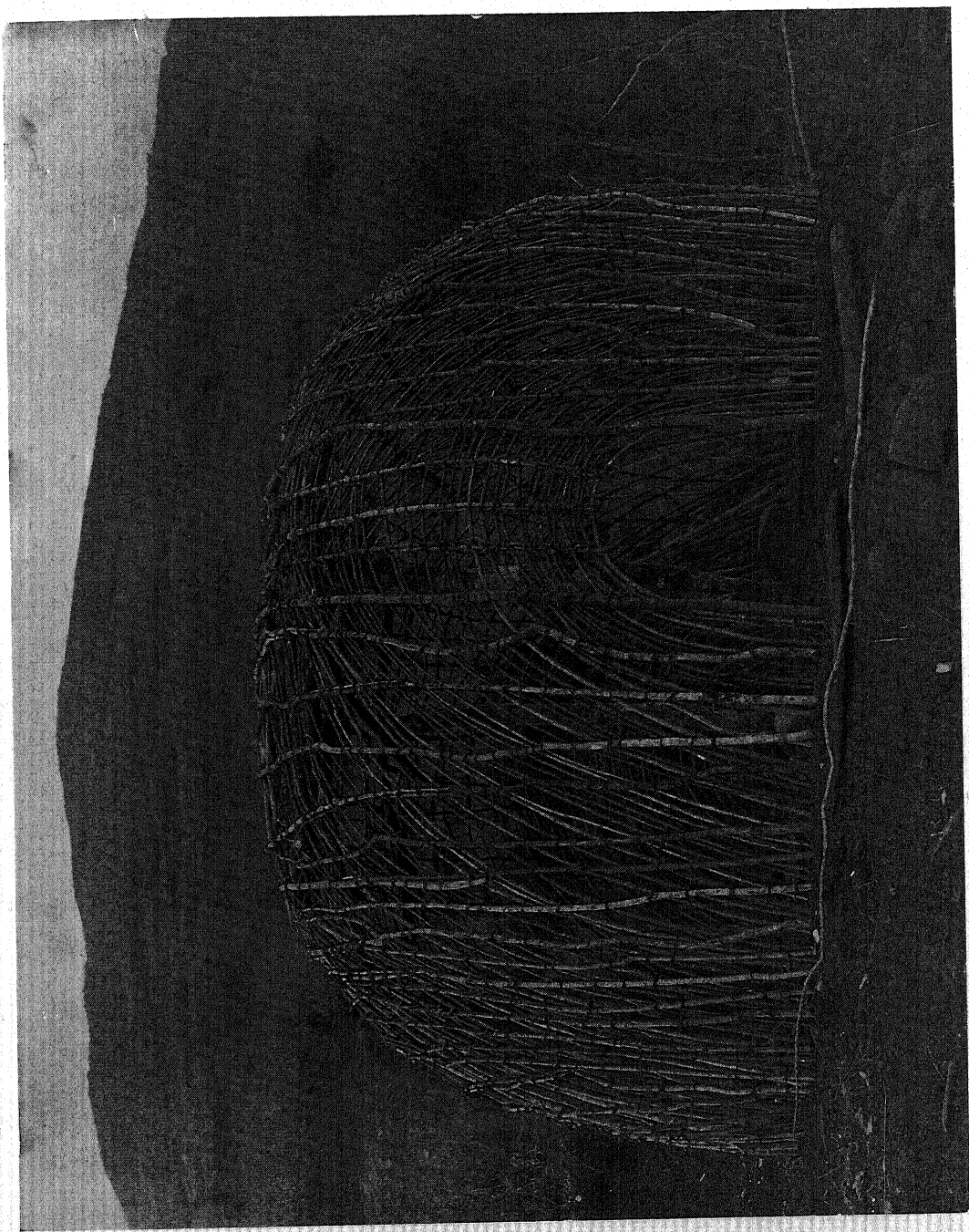
of Korsten there is to-day a pleasing township, with no evil-smelling rubbish dumps, no half-starved dogs and fowls scratching among the garbage, no goats or pigs wandering in and out of dwellings. Along concrete roadways, flanked on each side by trees and grass spacing, motor cars speed, filled with Native occupants. Shops are common — general dealer's, butcher's, shoe-maker's and so on. The houses are semi-detached, uniform but with sufficient diversity in detail to take away drabness. Before each house is a fenced-in garden with hedges; some of the gardens are open flower-gardens; some boast of vegetables; some are grass lawns. It is the common testimony of those acquainted with McNamee township that the inhabitants, though they were removed from so vile a slum have shown so great a house-pride that their houses are kept scrupulously neat and clean. The rent charged for these houses — one living-room and two bedrooms — is 16s. per month. Electric light is provided at 1s. 6d. per month. Medical, nursing and midwifery services are provided free, as are also unlimited water, waterborne sewerage and removal of rubbish. Every house has not only fencing provided, but also fireplaces, stoves, cupboards and shelves.

It has been declared that behind the whole scheme is a spirit of goodwill and friendliness towards those for whom the planning is done — the human touch so often lacking in organised social service. One outstanding illustration of this is that a hundred special one-room dwellings for Natives have been erected. They are placed cloister-like about a grass quadrangle. They are fully furnished and each is fitted with water-borne sewerage, electric light and paraffin stove. The tenants — old, disabled people — pay no rent, and in addition receive ten

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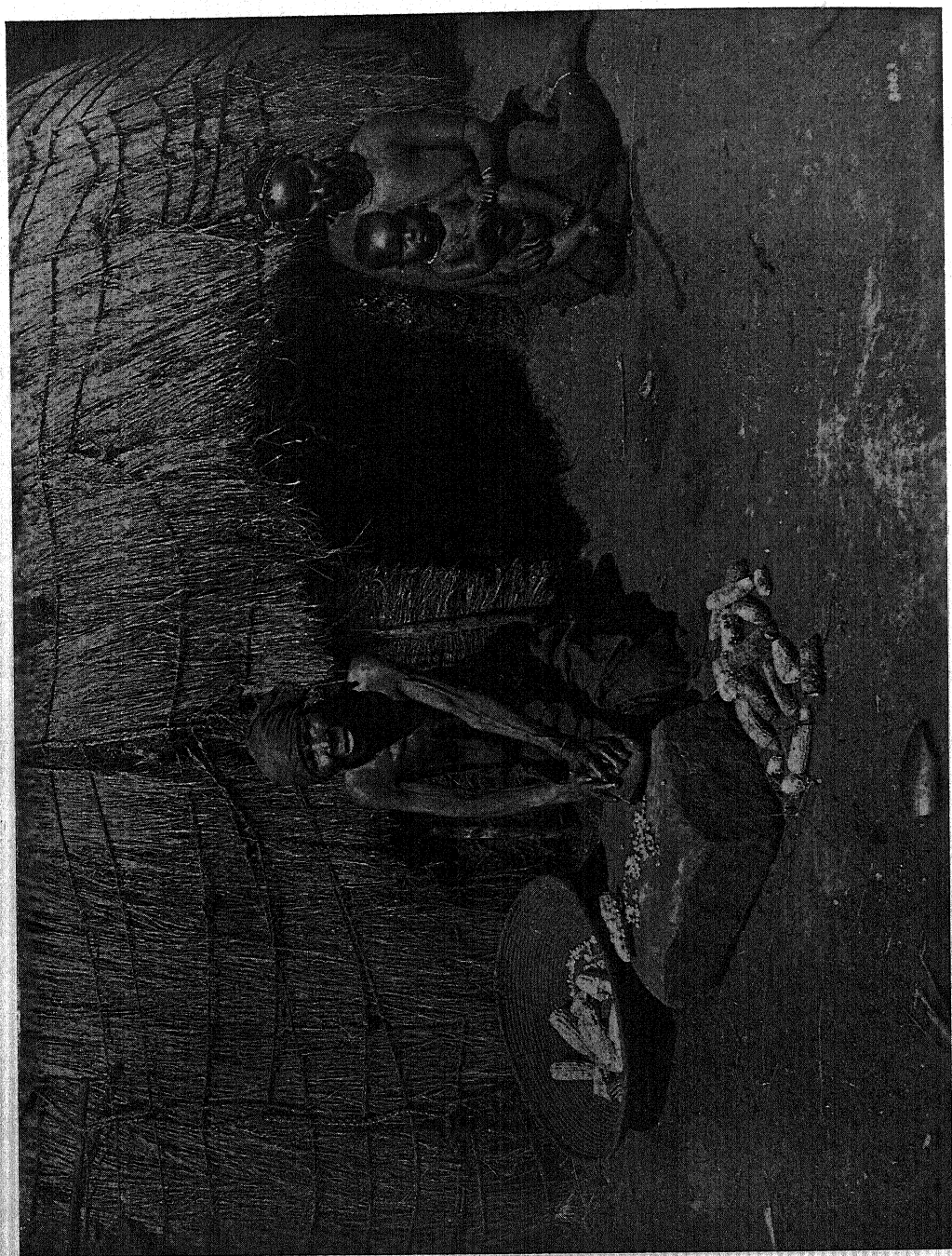
shillings a month for their food from local charities. Many of them have received in recent days the old-age pension now granted to Africans. And — crowning touch of all — a day or two before Christmas each year, one of the leading councillors visits the occupants to give each person a Christmas gift and the season's greetings.

This kind of scheme calls for multiplication throughout South Africa.



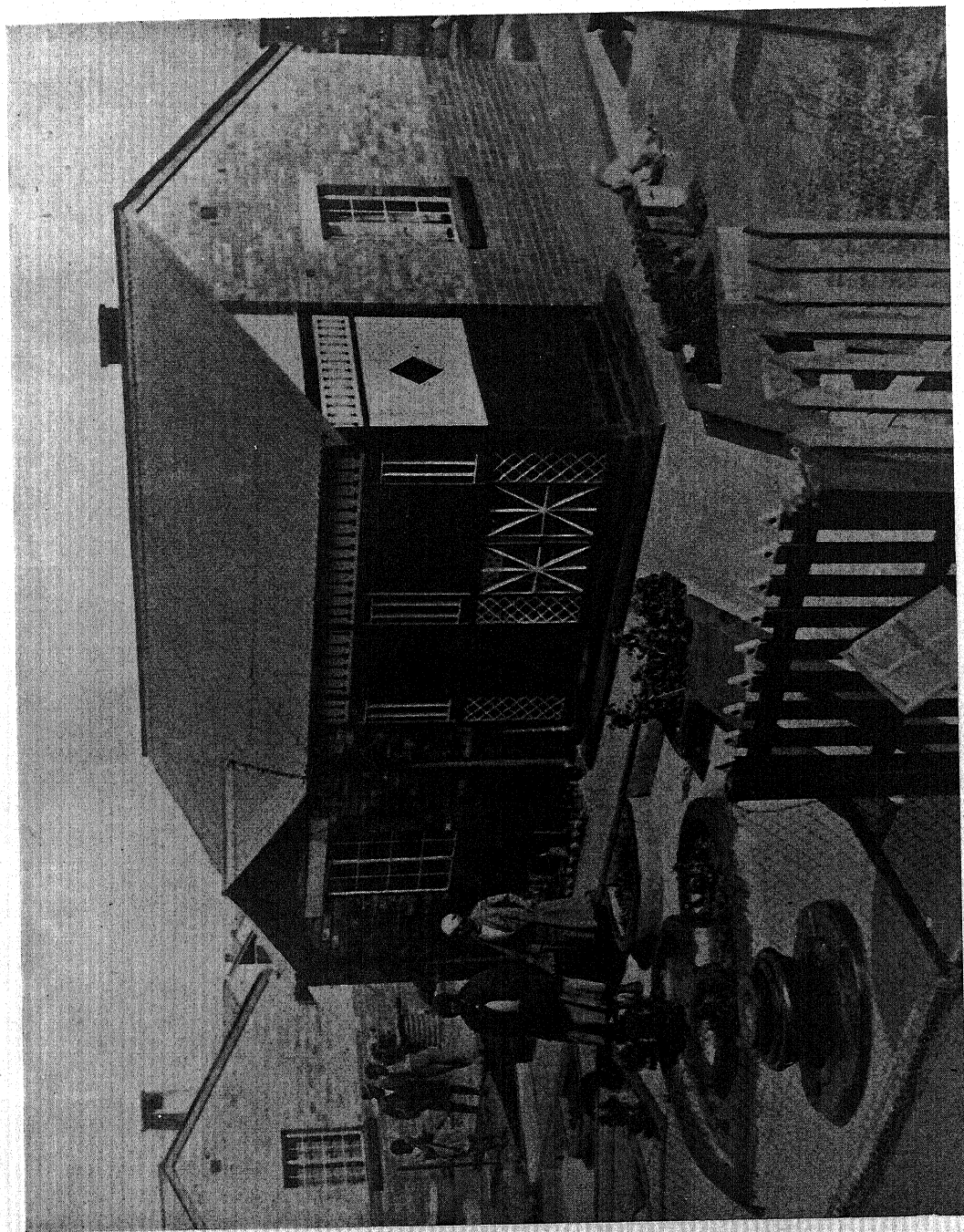
The skeleton of a primitive beehive hut, only requiring the thatch to make it home.



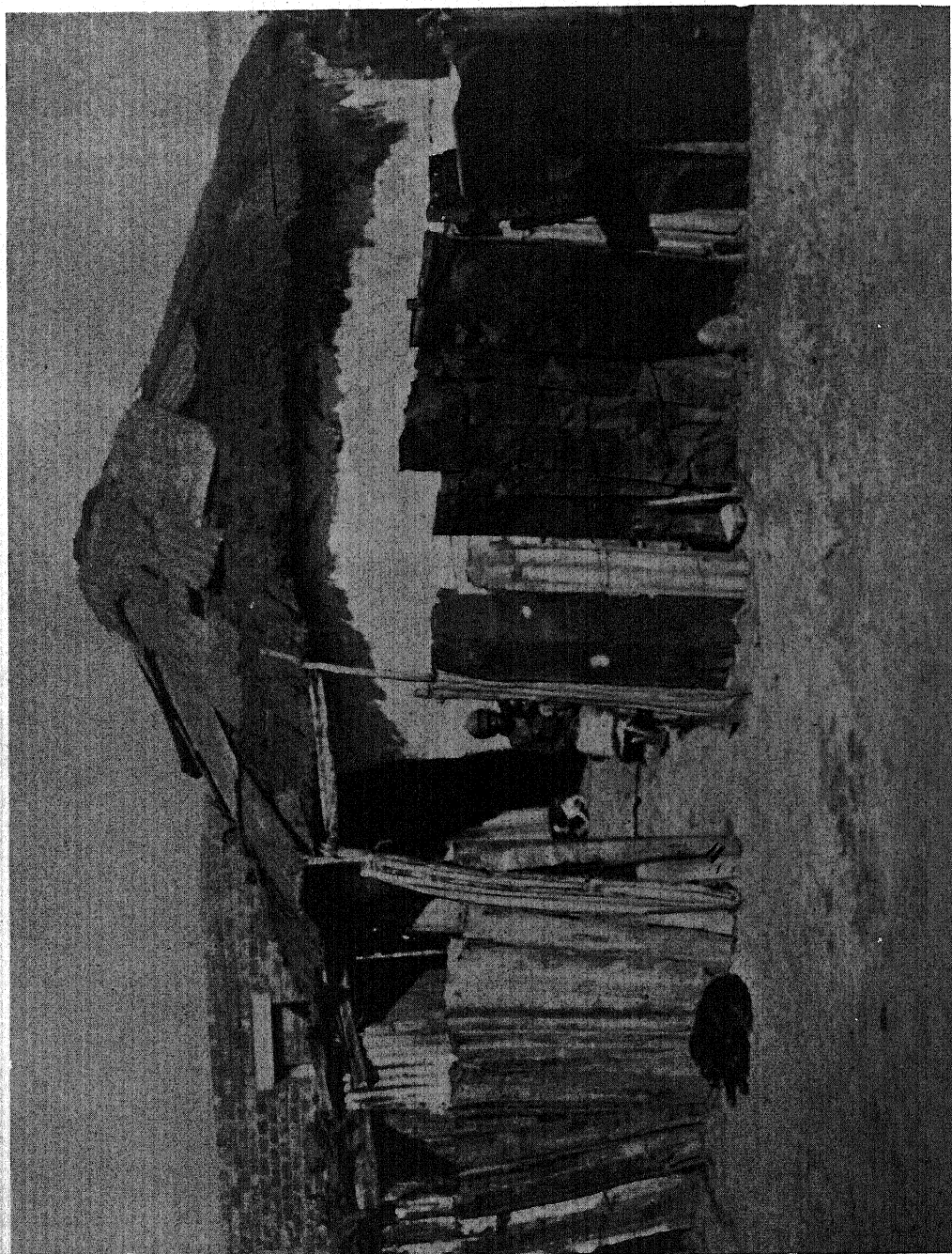


Grinding maize and grinding poverty often go hand in hand.



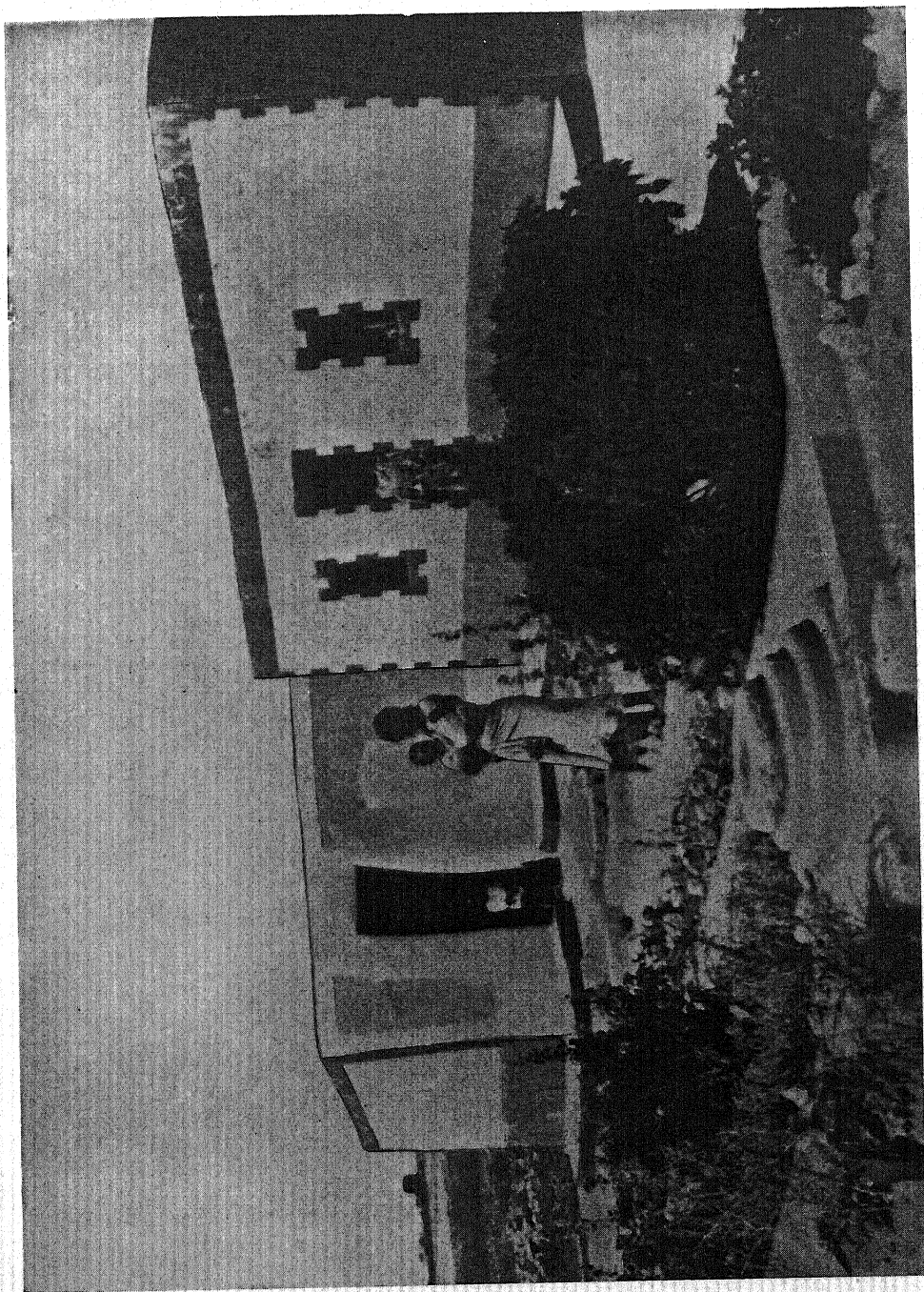


Prize-winner of a municipal Homes Competition. Generally speaking, Africans are not permitted to build their homes, and the houses under municipal authorities are built by Europeans at European cost levels. Mass produced, they have a soulless similarity and a house such as this is an outstanding exception.

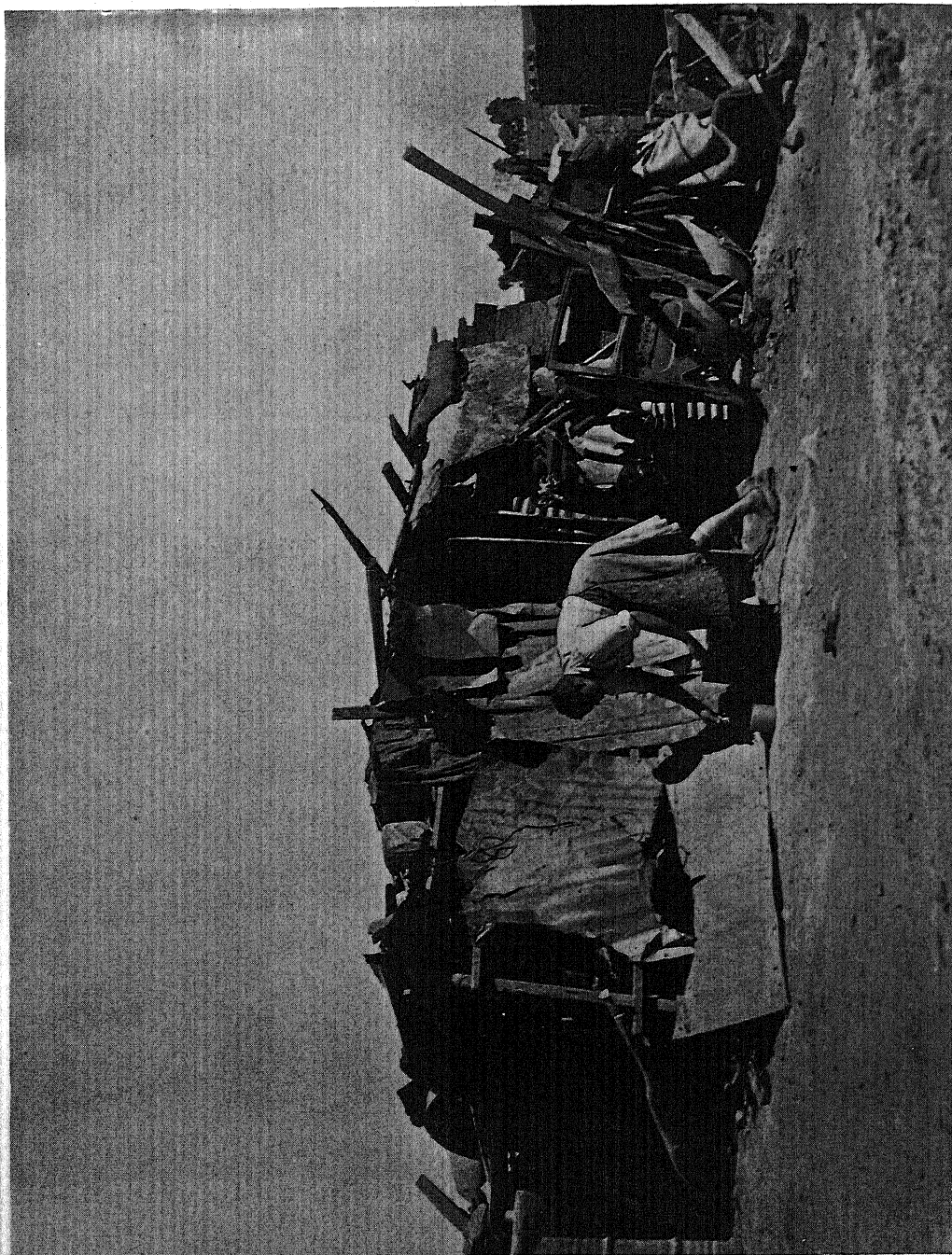


Typical housing of hundreds of thousands of Africans on European-owned farms and within and without the boundaries of most urban areas.





An African home in the country, where care, cleanliness and pride are self-evident.



What real home-life can there be in hovels such as this? Yet the woman's dress indicates that the opportunities of better conditions would not be neglected.



## CHAPTER IX

### DEAD-END JOBS

TO A LARGE number of Europeans in South Africa one of the most familiar sights is the outline of the city of Johannesburg with its towering sky-scrapers silhouetted against the blue. It is a sight unique in a land of wide vistas and sparseness of population. To many Europeans also scanning that outline it speaks of romance. For the city is only about sixty years old, and yet gathered within it is the largest population in Southern Africa. It has a unique place among men because of its rapid growth and as the hub of the world's greatest goldfield. Here indeed is a romance of modern progress. To some others, however, the greatest romance behind the outline is the fact that here, of all the great 'European' cities on the globe, is one in which, from the sewers below the surface to the last bucketful of cement completing the highest building, all the heavy manual labour has been performed by Africans.

There is the same story behind the architectural beauty of the Birchenough Bridge which crosses the Sabie River in eastern Southern Rhodesia. And we find a like tale when we look into the development of South Africa's eleven thousand miles of railway.

In the Great War of 1914—18 there was sent over to France and other theatres of conflict the South African Native Labour Contingent, a fine body of Bantu men. They were not allowed to serve in the combatant ranks, but they toiled behind the lines. The senior officer in charge was Colonel Pritchard, C.M.G., the head of the

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Native Affairs Department in Johannesburg. When the war was over Col. Pritchard told of the high reputation the South African Natives gained in France for conduct, courage and hard work. They established themselves as the best labourers in France. Later, at the ports, they toiled in all weathers, and ships that were taking five and six days to discharge, they discharged in two or three. Twice Sir Douglas Haig sent appreciative letters in regard to their work, but the greatest honour paid to them in France was their inspection by King George V, who was accompanied by Queen Mary, the Prince of Wales, the Commander-in-Chief and others.

In the war of 1939-45 South African Bantu again proved their worth. When South African European soldiers found themselves in difficulties in Italy, they dispatched an urgent message, 'Send us our Basuto.' The latter, along with other Native soldiers from the Union, in the desert operations of North Africa, had shown the stuff of which they were made.

The Africans' labour achievements in a European set-up are all the more remarkable when we remember their historical background. The Europeans who first made contact with the Bantu in Southern Africa found them engaged in vast migrations and exterminating inter-tribal warfare which rendered them little better than pastoral nomads. They had largely lost their own primitive arts and crafts. It is only settled people who have settled crafts. In this respect the Bantu at the southern end of the continent were different from those dwelling northward in the interior. Near to the equator, in the latter half of last century, notwithstanding the terrible destruction of life and the tribal unsettlement occasioned by the slave trade, the conditions of Bantu life were much more secure

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and stable, and not a few arts and handicrafts of a fairly high order flourished. There was working in iron, copper and gold, carried through from the smelting to the finished product, cotton-weaving, bark-cloth tanning, wood tanning, wood and ivory carving, basket and mat-weaving, skin dressing, and pottery. An important fact was that, with the exception of work in iron, which was generally confined to certain families, all these arts and handicrafts were common property of the adults of the tribes. Boys learned the management of cattle, sheep and goats, but they were also taught to make nets and traps, spears and throwing-sticks, bows and arrows. If they lived near deep waters, they also learned the woodcraft necessary for the selection of the right tree for making their canoes, and they took part in hollowing them out, and in the toilsome work of rolling them from the forest to the water's edge. By the most southerly Bantu, however, these arts had mostly been lost because of their unsettlement through migrations and wars. Before the missionaries and other Europeans met them they were unlike the Natives further north in regard to crafts. They went on building their huts, cultivating their fields more or less, and tending their stock. But otherwise many of the race's former occupations were gone, not to return. As a result, racial self-dependence had become seriously undermined. Upon Bantu youths the changes had fallen with devastating effect, particularly as regards character-building. Under the old conditions, the youths were trained in real and useful work, but by the time the Bantu migrations had reached the lower end of the continent many of the old crafts were lost.

This was the situation that faced early missionaries in South Africa, and they sought to meet it by giving attention to industrial labour and training. Their purpose

was not primarily economic. Rather was it to train a pastoral and warlike people, emerging from barbarism, to the disciplined routine of regular work, and to lead them to higher and more civilized standards of living. Indolence, so marked in Bantu men except when engaged in war and the chase, was felt to be a serious defect of character.

It has been a common charge against missionaries and those desiring the advancement of the African that they gave too much attention to book learning and did not teach the Natives 'to work'; that is, did not give them industrial training. Nothing could be more erroneous than such a reading of history. From the 'twenties of last century missionaries in South Africa were training the Bantu in irrigation, in more advanced methods of agriculture, including the use of the plough, in planting fruit trees, in brick-making and house-building. Some time later regular instruction was given in carpentry, wagon-making and blacksmithing, printing and bookbinding. Girls were taught house-keeping, cooking and sewing. Attempts were also made to revive old Native industries like pottery, basket-making and mat and hat-weaving. In short, a mission station like Lovedale has in the course of its history taught, on the industrial side, agriculture, horticulture, carpentry, building and plastering, wagon-making, blacksmithing, printing and bookbinding, shoe-making, domestic science (house-keeping, cooking, sewing and laundry-work), nursing, telegraphy, basket-making, rug-making, bee-keeping and poultry-farming. In all of these the African has shown his capacity to be an efficient, if at times a slow, worker.

The time came also in the development of South Africa when the diamond mines at Kimberley and the



gold mines on the Rand drew hundreds of thousands of Africans into modern industrial life.

What has been South Africa's reaction to the great army of Black workers with their potential skill? There have been times when the cry has been raised, 'Teach the Natives to work.' But when some have heeded this cry and have sought to impart skill, they have been met with the prohibition, 'Don't teach the Natives trades: they will cut out the White man.' In short, there has been an oft-repeated demand that only dead-end jobs should be the portion of the African.

In our land there is a great force of Native man-power waiting to be utilized — men who have proved themselves to be not only muscular in body but intelligent in mind. They are capable of much higher and more responsible duties than have yet been allotted to them. Along with this fact, South Africa's need, as we have already emphasized, if it is to advance as a modern nation, is to increase the productive capacity of its citizens of all races. Unless this is done, the Union is to find its internal development stultified and is to lag behind other similar countries in the race of progress.

In other parts of Africa, too, Black people have shown their capacity. In some sections of the continent nothing is more usual than to see African engine-drivers and firemen, African station-masters, African post-masters and other officials, some in high administrative posts. When, however, we come to the Union of South Africa the scene is changed. Here, in a civilized country, we have a deliberate policy to keep the largest section of the population unskilled. Skilled work is the preserve of the European. To the African are relegated the dirty and heavy tasks. For him indeed there is little else than dead-end jobs.

An interesting story lies behind the position to-day. In 1911 the recently formed South African Union Government passed an Act known as the Mines and Works Act. This gave the Government power to make regulations for the issue of certificates of competency in certain skilled occupations, particularly in mining and engineering works. In 1923 the Government made regulations under this Act by which Europeans only could obtain these certificates of competency. The matter went to the law courts and judgment was given that these regulations were *ultra vires*. Thereafter the European trade unions brought pressure to bear on the Government for further legislation, so in 1926 Parliament passed an amending Act, under which new regulations could be made. Those regulations ensured that certificates of competency in such occupations as engine-driving, blasting and other skilled mechanical work might be granted to Europeans, Cape Coloured, Mauritius Creoles and St. Helena persons, but not to Bantu. So far, this Act, which is popularly known as the Colour Bar Act, has been applied only to the mines.

Under the Industrial Conciliation Act, however, European trade unions in general have ensured that jobs with high wages are reserved for European skilled workers only. This Act provides machinery by which employers and employees can settle disputes by means of Industrial Councils and without recourse to strikes and lockouts. The Act excludes from its operation all Bantu who must carry passes, which in practice means that only Bantu in the Cape Province benefit by the Act. If an Industrial Council reports to the Minister of Labour that it has reached agreement in regard to wages in a particular trade, but that such an agreement would not be workable in practice if Bantu workers were employed in the industry

at the agreed rates, the Minister has power to request the Council to recommend a lower scale of wages for the Bantu in that industry. The Industrial Conciliation Act is meant to apply only to the organised skilled industries.

By such methods European trade unions have laid themselves open to the charge that, through another form of South African isolationism, they are not, like trade unions in other countries, concerned with the welfare of the workers generally, but only with the small body of European skilled labour. To this charge they reply that they are seeking to maintain the civilized standard reached by long years of struggle.

While it is possible to say that any laws which apply to people on grounds of colour only are colour bar laws, to the Bantu in the Union 'colour bar' signifies chiefly those laws which bar them, no matter what skill they may acquire, from obtaining good posts in skilled occupations. In a recent leading article the *Cape Times* declared: 'If there is one supreme example in the Union of communal selfishness, of ignoble fear combined with ruthless greed, that example is the colour bar.'

It is not a compliment to the White artisan to suggest that the poor European should be protected from the advancing and progressive Native. More important is the argument that if a higher standard of life could be attained by the Bantu their wants would be increased: they would seek more clothing, better homes, furniture and books, and all the accompaniment of the higher stage of life. Thus more employment would be provided for their own people and especially for the skilled. And such an improvement would be to the advantage of the whole of South Africa, both Black and White.

The Reserves and town locations are the natural spheres of outlet for the talents of Natives possessed of skill in trade. In such fields the Bantu people could receive the full benefit of the progress of the advanced among themselves, and there would be no competition with White industrial labour. But what has happened? The Reserves, through increase of population and of stock, have become poorer and poorer. Through world conditions and artificial restrictions in South Africa, the cost of living for those who have made advance in civilization has increased tremendously, while in various forms of labour Native wages have remained almost stationary. The result is that large sections of the population in the Reserves are heavily in debt and are probably on the whole poorer than they have ever been. Again, while in recent years, as we have seen, by colour bar legislation, the White population has effectively protected itself against Bantu competition in skilled labour in White areas, the White artisan has entered on fields that in all fairness should have been left as free as possible for Bantu artisans. We have previously noted how it is common throughout the Union to find a city or town built on a location for its urban Native dwellers with White labour, at rates of wages that make the rents of the dwellings above that which the Native can with comfort pay from his scanty wages. People earning 3s. 6d. a day inhabit houses built by men who receive 3s. 6d. an hour. If municipalities would adopt a more generous and fair-minded attitude, the problem of employment of the Native artisan would be solved, to the benefit of South Africa as a whole.

Happily this larger view is gaining increasing recognition. In the past there has been an easy-going and general tendency on the part of Europeans to regard the



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question of dead-end jobs for Africans as the responsibility of the 'other man'. Either, it was thought, the educationist was providing the African with education unsuited to South Africa, or the Government was not providing sufficient white collar jobs. Against the background of our earlier economy based entirely upon the farming and mining industries, the African was not his own best advocate, and muddled thinking by both Europeans and Africans was probably inevitable. Added to this, in the evolution of South Africa's secondary industries, fear complexes and the self-interest of the small pioneer body of skilled European labour combined to produce legislation of a discriminatory character. But now that two wars have advanced the importance of our industrial development, the smallness of our skilled labour force is becoming a matter of concern, and the acuteness of the housing problem in post-war days is emphasizing this fact. Though out-dated legislation still remains a barrier, dead-end jobs are no longer the responsibility of the 'other man'. Public opinion is being aroused. A remarkable phenomenon in recent years has been how so many business men have declared that the Bantu must be allowed to take his place in the ranks of skilled workers. Typical of such declarations was that of Mr. H. Watkins, President of the Association of Chambers of Commerce, who, towards the end of 1945, declared that if a country's real asset is its people, then prosperity can only come to South Africa when that asset is developed to the full. 'So long,' he said, 'as eighty per cent. of its population is deliberately confined to unskilled labour, the country's spending power in the home market is limited.' This in turn, he added, limits the development of secondary industries. 'The retention of

the colour bar places South Africa at a great disadvantage to those countries where it does not operate,' he added.

It is noteworthy that the Economic and Wage Commission of the South African Government in 1925 condemned the colour bar legislation in industry on the grounds that it was uneconomic and bad for the country. In 1935 the Industrial Legislation Commission did the same.

It can never be a healthy thing for any country to have the gap that exists in our country to-day between skilled and unskilled labour, especially when it is remembered that both must buy the necessities of life at the same market prices. In the Southern Transvaal, which includes Johannesburg, the industrial census figures revealed that in 1935-6 the average European wage was £262 per annum and the African £44 per annum. The gulf between skilled and unskilled wages is grossly disproportionate, and seems to be unparalleled in any other country.

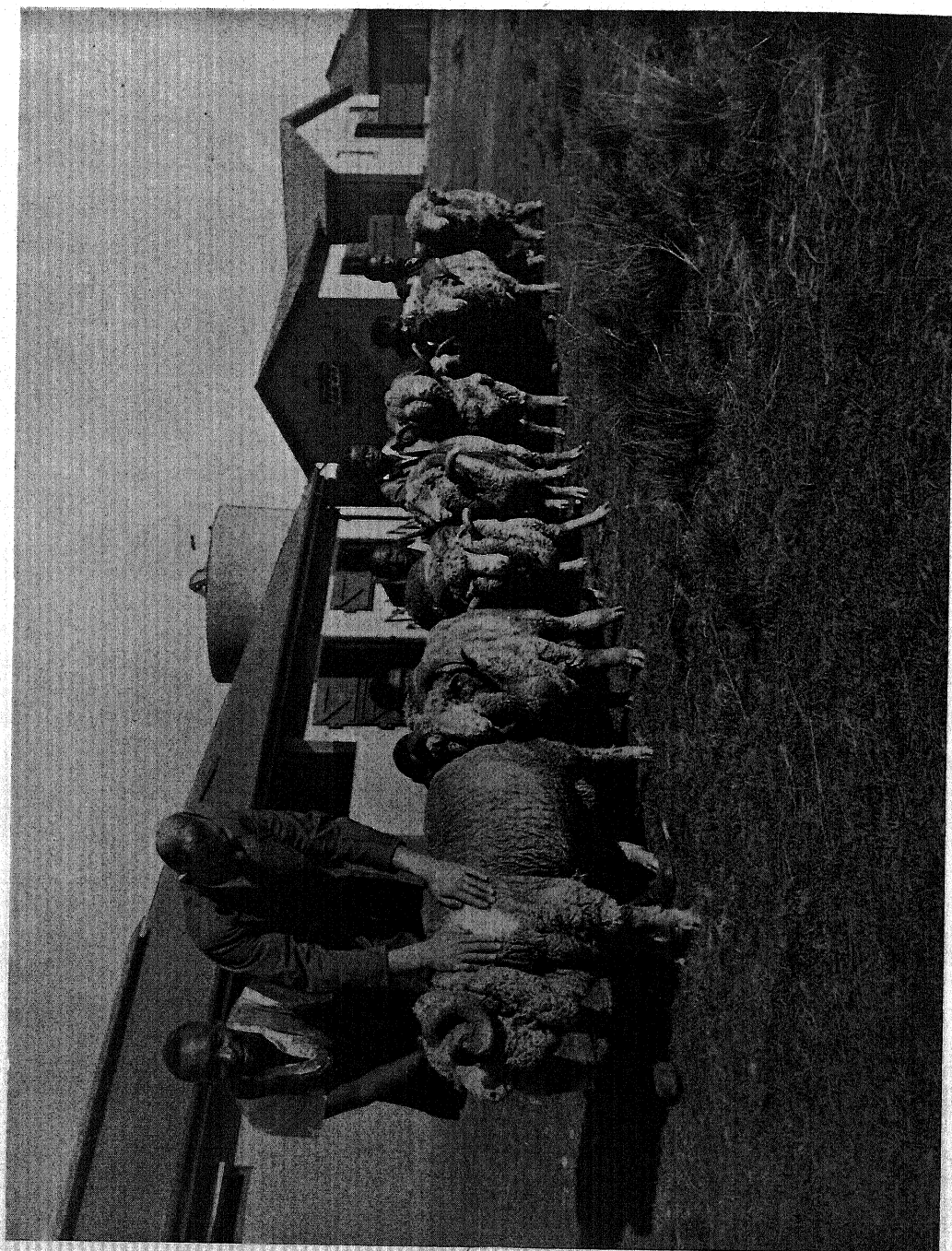
Inconsistently enough, in the Union, which is constantly hearing the cry that the Black man ought to be taught manual labour, and whose hoped-for future of constantly expanding industry calls for all the skilled manual labour that can be got, it is only in the professions that real opportunity for the African lies open. South Africa, through the Witwatersrand University, is now training fully qualified African medical men at the expense of the State, while others trained overseas have the status and emoluments of European practitioners. In regard to nursing South Africa declares that nothing is more fitting than that the African sick should be nursed by trained African women. Recent years have witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of African girls entering this profession, and yet the demand far exceeds the supply. In teaching too there are now thousands of teachers of all grades,

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many with University degrees. South Africa has accepted Native education as a national obligation that must be furthered, and by means of trained African personnel. It is true that both in nursing and teaching there is no accepted principle of equal pay for equal work or qualifications. Yet in these spheres the relegation of the Bantu to dead-end jobs has been departed from.

It may be asked, 'If this abandonment is beneficial for the country as a whole in the medical and educational worlds, why would it not be beneficial in all?'

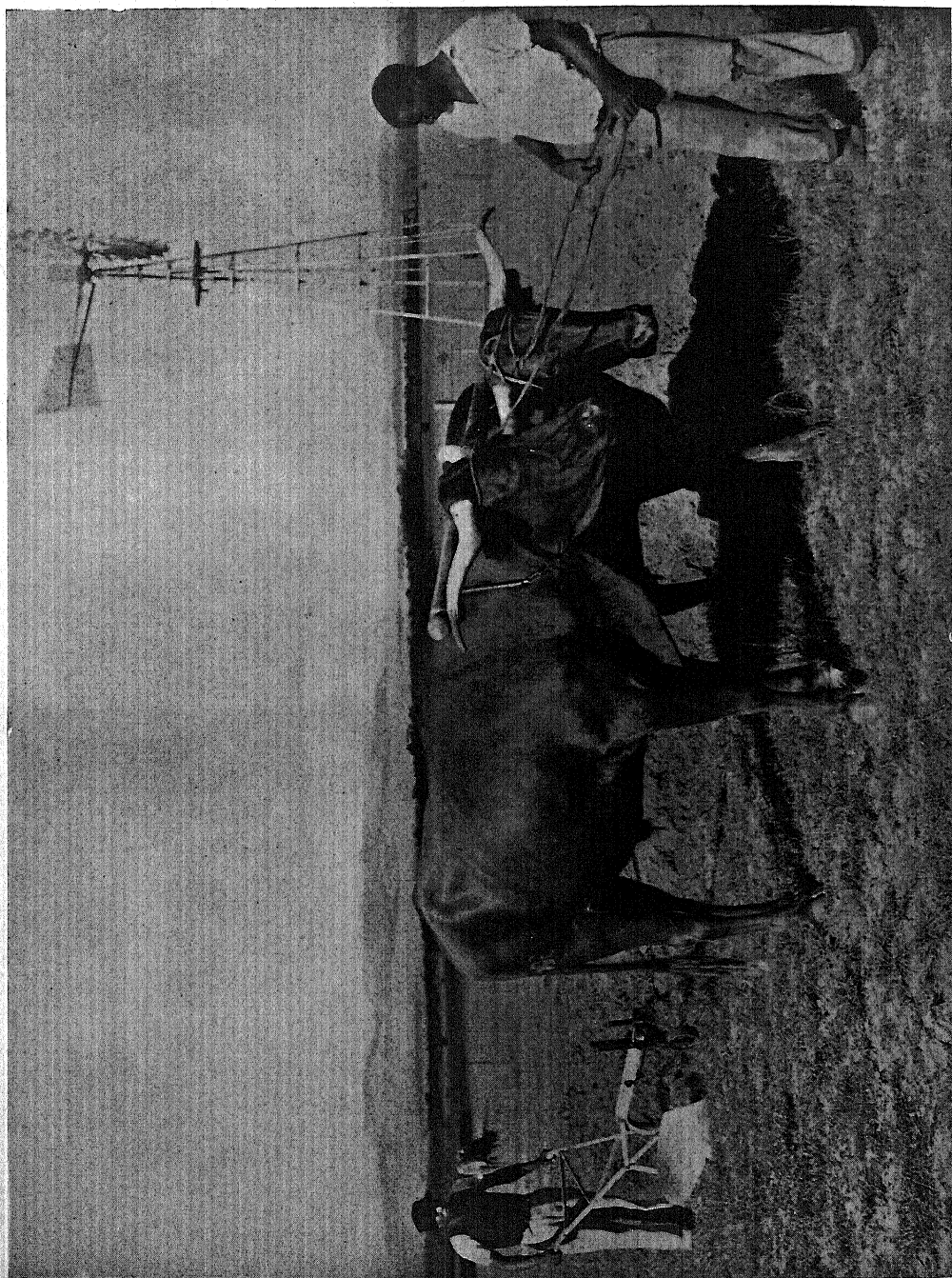
There are growing numbers who believe that South Africa's abandonment of the industrial colour bar is only a matter of time.







The reactionary sees only 'cows and kaffirs', yet even he is utterly dependent upon Native farm labour.





## CHAPTER X

### SICKNESS OF THE BODY

THE TALE of Native health in South Africa since the beginning of this century makes a sombre human drama. The past forty years have been peaceful and in many ways progressive years. During this period there have been no major wars between White and Black, mineral wealth has been fully exploited, the European population has doubled itself while its influence upon the Native population has increased a hundredfold. Because all this has been accomplished without a violent history of struggle and conquest, the average European has not seen in perspective the staggering changes which these years have wrought in Native diet and health conditions generally. There is a common idea among those who do not penetrate below the surface that the Native population of the Union is marvellously healthy. The reverse is the case. There has been a whole range of contributory causes — malnutrition, slum conditions, changes in employment and modes of living — that have operated with devastating effect upon the Bantu population. Without belittling what the European has done in preventive and curative measures, the fact remains that the balance of nature has been upset, so that there is in truth to-day a growing sickness of the body among the African people.

Attempts have been made to present these facts in the form of health statistics, economic memoranda and political propaganda. But somehow they have failed to enlighten the European or to enlist public sympathy on a

nationwide scale. It is significant, however, that in one quarter the need has been realistically sensed: the South African troops 'up north' demanded that the national war memorial, commemorating the struggle of 1939-45, should be a 'living memorial,' and suggested that it be closely related to the betterment of Non-European health. And not only did the European forces initiate and advocate such a scheme: they sacrificed pay that it might become a reality.

It is difficult to ascertain the full facts of Native health in South Africa, because vital statistics in regard to the African population are not required by law. With reason it is asserted that government authorities have more knowledge of the causes of death and the incidence of sickness among cattle than among humans of the Bantu race. When a cow, even in some isolated rural part, dies, often it is not buried till a veterinary officer has paid a visit and satisfied himself as to the cause of death, but a man or woman may pass away and no action, beyond burial by neighbours, is taken; no record even is kept.

Yet there are authorities who have made sure of the facts. We shall cite two.

General Smuts, speaking to a great audience in Cape Town in 1942, declared that there were the matters of Native health and housing on which South Africa had done practically nothing. So far, in these things South Africa had looked the other way. If there was one thing more than another which the people of the Union must immediately and thoroughly do, it was to look into the question of Native health and do all they could to improve it. There is, went on General Smuts, a heavy death-rate among the children, and a serious incidence of sickness among adult Natives which could not be tolerated. If



the South African people wanted to see Africans happy and contented, they would have to tackle this problem without delay.

General Smuts further recalled his experience in East Africa during the war of 1914—1918. In that war they had to use porters, and porters were not easy to find. Doctors said the reason was that even then sickness and disease had undermined the health of the East African Native. As a matter of fact, Europeans, because their health was looked after closely, were immune from disease to a much greater extent than Africans.

Our other authority is the National Health Services Commission whose report in 1944 has become for many South Africa's charter of health. On that report we shall draw freely. In its pages the Commission declared that the evidence received strongly suggested—it could do no more owing to the absence of precise data extending over long periods—that in the Territories, on the farms and in the towns the health of the Bantu is deteriorating.

The Commission recorded that in Pretoria 60.9 per cent. of African girls and 77.85 per cent. of African boys are victims of malnutrition. In the Letaba district the figures were found to be 83.60 per cent. for African girls and 99.67 per cent. for African boys.

It is the fact of poverty that is the root cause of much Native ill-health. The Commission declared that one factor stood out pre-eminently—the grinding poverty of almost all of the Non-European, and a substantial part of the European population of the Union.

It had been found that it is by no means rare for the members of a Bantu family to be more numerous than the blankets it possesses. This encourages the unhealthy practice of sleeping partially or even full-dressed in

daytime attire. Inadequacy of personal clothing leads to verminous conditions and to lowered resistance against disease, especially respiratory disease.

Again, poverty places elementary environmental health services beyond the reach of the individual and of whole communities of whom the great majority is poor. This refers particularly to housing, water-supply and sanitary removals.

Poverty likewise makes it impossible for its victims to purchase for themselves adequate dietries, particularly in urban areas, where they are dependent almost entirely upon purchased foodstuffs, of which the health protective varieties are nearly always the most expensive. Incomes are too low to enable the purchase of minimum low-cost diets in the case of most urban Natives not fed in compounds or in private houses.

Poverty moreover denies many of the resources of modern medicine to large sections of the population who under existing conditions can only obtain medical help through the charity of individuals or voluntary organisations quite unable to provide the full range of modern therapeutic measures; or through the inadequate facilities afforded them by the district surgeoncy system and free beds in public hospitals.

The Commission went on to say that a further factor contributing to the decline of Native health is ignorance. How could it be otherwise with almost two-thirds of Native children out of school? Through ignorance, the people do not know how to make the best use of the slender economic resources they possess. They do not appreciate their needs and consequently make no effort to meet them, even when perhaps they could, for instance in the provision of windows in their dwellings, of simple

sanitary conveniences, of protection to wells and springs, and of home-grown vegetables.

Ignorance, too, often prevents its victims from recognising the early stages of disease and thus from seeking help at a stage when it is more likely to result in speedy and complete cure; and it prevents them from co-operating intelligently with many of the instructions given by their medical attendants. In regard to ignorance the Commission finally declared that it not only prevents its victims from seeking and co-operating with the resources of rational medicine: it renders them an easy prey to exploitation by people as ignorant as themselves or by deliberately fraudulent quacks. Superstition and quackery play a tremendous part — not only among Non-Europeans — in preventing the adoption of hygienic practices even when they are taught, and the acceptance of the benefits of rational medicine when these are available. The sums spent annually in the Union on supposed remedies for ill-health issued by witch-doctors, herbalists and quacks cannot be ascertained but it certainly runs into seven figures. Over and above this is the vast sum spent on nostrums and patent medicines, often advertised by subtle appeals to an education which includes a smattering of science, but not enough to distinguish between well-grounded and merely plausible claims.

The Commission also found that there was a backwardness due to traditional ways and preference for them which adversely affected the health of the Bantu and militated against improvement. From time immemorial in the case of all the Native tribes they had been country dwellers. In the wide open spaces, constantly swept by wind and exposed to brilliant sunshine, there was no overcrowding; and the evils of insanitation were quickly

averted by nature. There was no need for the establishment of local government for the purpose of communal hygienic measures. These same people, driven swiftly by economic forces which they scarcely understand, into the backyards of city and town, or even into villages and peri-urban holdings, tend to bring with them customs and practices which are now a menace to their own health and that of their neighbours. At the same time, they make no spontaneous attempt to organize themselves with local authorities for the purpose of establishing communal sanitary services and control, and tend to resent any attempt to impose such control upon them from without. This explains in part the insanitation in peri-urban settlements—the desire of migrants from rural to urban areas to escape restrictions which seem to them an unnecessary interference with their liberties. Even in the rural areas, especially in the Native Reserves, the increasing density of the population, coupled with a conservative clinging to traditional customs, makes it difficult to introduce measures for the control of sanitation.

Another factor tending to ill-health among Africans deserves to be noted—the psychic element. In the case of thousands, serious illness is attributed to witchcraft. They believe that an enemy has done this. As a result, they often sink into despondency and thereby greatly retard their cure, or they may even adopt practices that inevitably end in death. The writer has known a Bantu chief, who was suffering agony of body, to be taken from his hut, suspended between two men on horseback, and ridden in this fashion for hours over the veld, the horsemen taking many twistings and turnings. He was finally deposited in a different village, not far from where they set out, the hope behind the racking process being that in this way



the evil spirits in league with the enemy would be outwitted and the sick man rescued from their clutches.

The general picture is not wholly dark. In recent years the Bantu have become surprisingly hospital-minded. It is not fifty years since the pioneer mission hospital was opened at Lovedale, but when it was opened it stood for a time with no bed occupied. The Native people would not entrust their sick to it. A hospital, they thought, was a place to die in, not to get well in. A railway accident occurred and some Bantu injured were taken to hospital, with no one asking 'By your leave.' When the men recovered, this surprising news went round the countryside and patients began to come in on their own account. Still, for years it was uphill work, for the confidence of the people was not easily gained.

Twelve years ago an African leader declared:

We Xhosas have this as our belief: when a man is sick he must be fully fed so that there may not be added to his other troubles that of feeling hungry. Europeans by scientific knowledge have come to realise that in the case of certain complaints this is not wise. As a consequence, our people have a prejudice against hospitals, because they think they will be killed by hunger and starvation in them. The reason of that is sheer ignorance on our part.

To-day the scene is changed all over the country. Indeed, so hospital-minded have the African people become that the Johannesburg General Hospital has attained a notoriety for its overcrowded condition, and many other hospitals are in hardly better case. Not long ago the superintendent of a tuberculosis hospital for Native people — a type of hospital liable to be feared more than a general hospital — told how increasing numbers of patients had presented themselves seeking admission, so that the hospital could be filled to overflowing with patients from a radius

of less than fifteen miles. It is an additional hopeful feature that many more are seeking aid at the first onset of disease.

A cheering feature again is that the Union Department of Health and other authorities are seeking to meet more adequately the need of the African people. Such hospitals as King Edward VIII Hospital at Durban, the Coronation Hospital at Johannesburg, and the Macvicar Tuberculosis Hospital at Lovedale are all large, well-equipped Native Hospitals provided by Government or public bodies. At the same time only the fringe of the need is being met. The National Health Services Commission reported that in the Union there were 10,277 beds for Europeans and 9,466 for Non-Europeans. In view of the enormously greater Non-European population the latter is a pitifully inadequate figure. It is calculated that in civilised countries there should be a hospital bed to every two hundred of the population. The actual figure in South Africa for Non-Europeans is a bed for every eight hundred and thirty-six.

There are special reasons why the increasing desire of the African people to make use of hospitals should be ungrudgingly satisfied. For people of all races the modern hospital is an agency of great good, physically but also spiritually. It relieves pain and may save life; its discipline, order and cleanliness are highly educative, and its daily practice is the lesson of the good Samaritan applied to modern conditions. To a thoughtful African, the technique of a hospital presents an alternative and a contrast to the witch-hunting and spirit-appeasing efforts of his unenlightened ancestors or neighbours. Even more so is this the case in a mission hospital. A man who has been lying in a dingy hut with his friends sitting around

talking excitedly and angrily about who it can be that is making him ill, finds himself in a clean ward, and hears the Twenty-third Psalm read quietly in his own language; and as a similar experience is repeated day by day, the idea can hardly help dawning that the overruling Power is perhaps benign, and that from the spiritual point of view he is in safer hands than he thought. It would be difficult to imagine a state of things more harmful both to the Africans themselves and to their European neighbours than that which in the past, and not infrequently even to-day, is found among the South African Bantu; infectious and contagious diseases being spread in all directions by people ignorant of their real nature and mode of spread; sick people suffering all kinds of pain and distresses with no means of relief; no suitable sick diet and no attempt at night nursing; affection and solicitude with no means of effective action, while all the time innocent people are undergoing social persecution at the hand of their neighbours in the sincere belief that they are the cause of their sickness.

One cause of the people's hospital consciousness is the influence of African nurses, of whom there are now some hundreds. In all quarters of the land—in sordid town locations, in Native reserves, in town and city hospitals that provide wards for Africans—are working to-day African girls who have passed the same examinations, under the same Medical or Nursing Council, as their White sisters. They stand for science as against superstition, for fresh-air, cleanliness and temperance, as against overcrowding, dirt and the canteen. There can hardly be an over-estimate of the effect they are having in changing the African people's attitude to sickness and health.

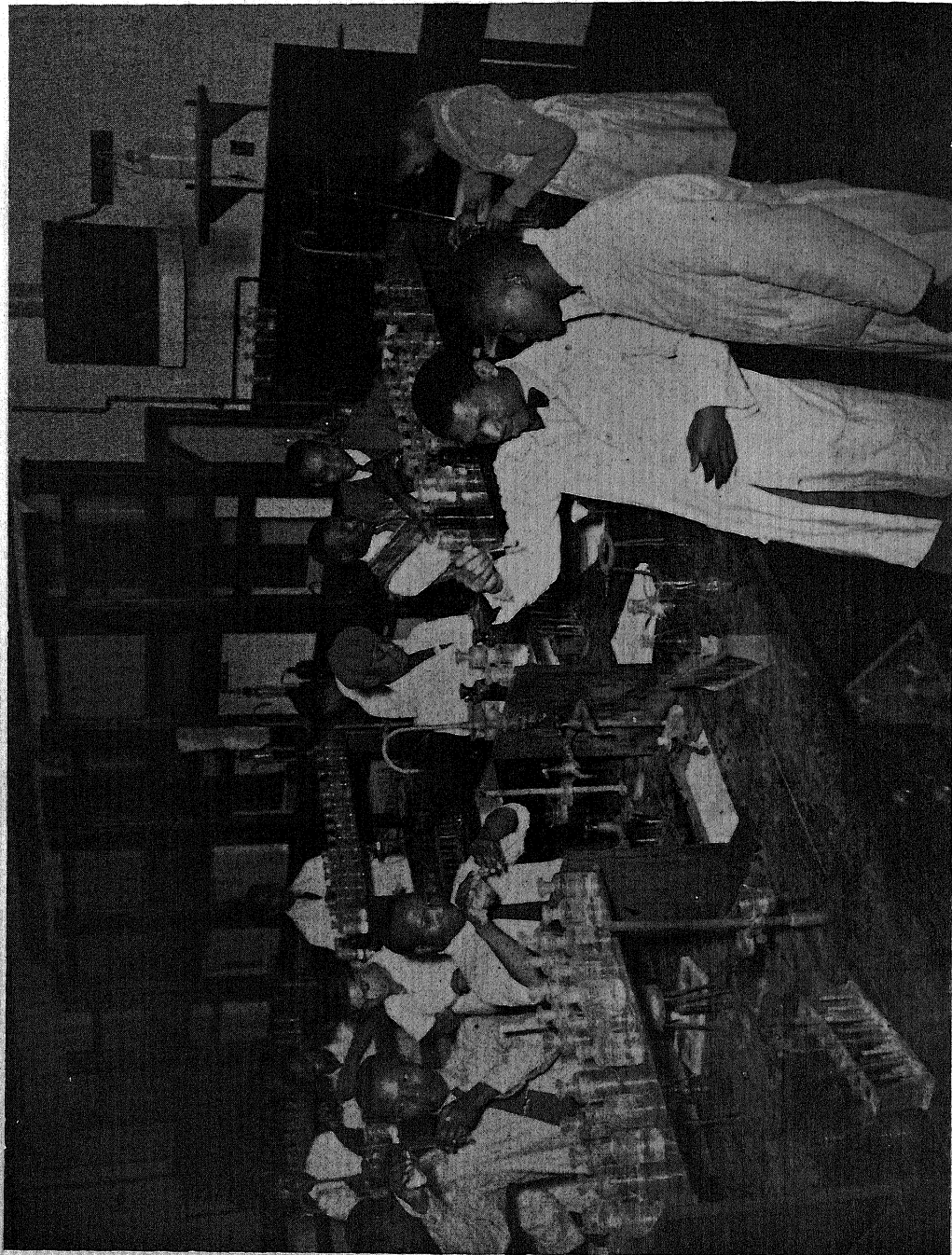
## AFRICAN CONTRASTS

Another hopeful feature in the situation is that the University of the Witwatersrand is now receiving for the full course in medicine or dentistry, African, Coloured and Indian students. To provide more doctors of their own race for the African people, the Department of Native Affairs annually makes scholarships available at the Witwatersrand University for the training of men and women in the medical profession. Some have recently graduated, and from henceforth there is assured a small but steady stream of qualified men and women of African blood, who will be the physicians and surgeons of their own race, and supplementing the few who in former years were trained overseas. It is yet the day of small things, but one remembers how the Italian guide, leaping over a streamlet in the mountains, declared, 'This is what they call the Tiber down at Rome.'



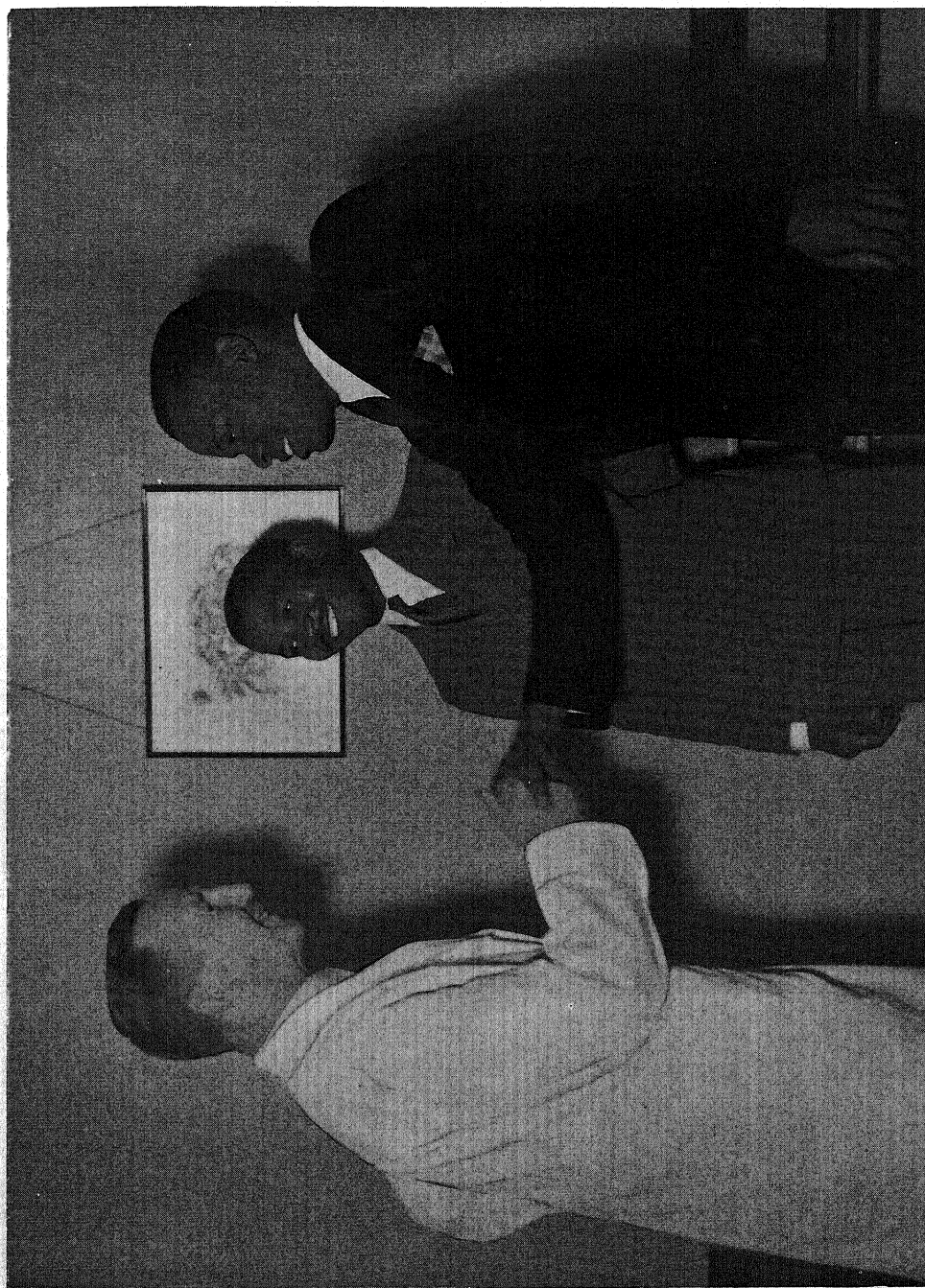


A discussion on the curative powers of dried sand-shark.



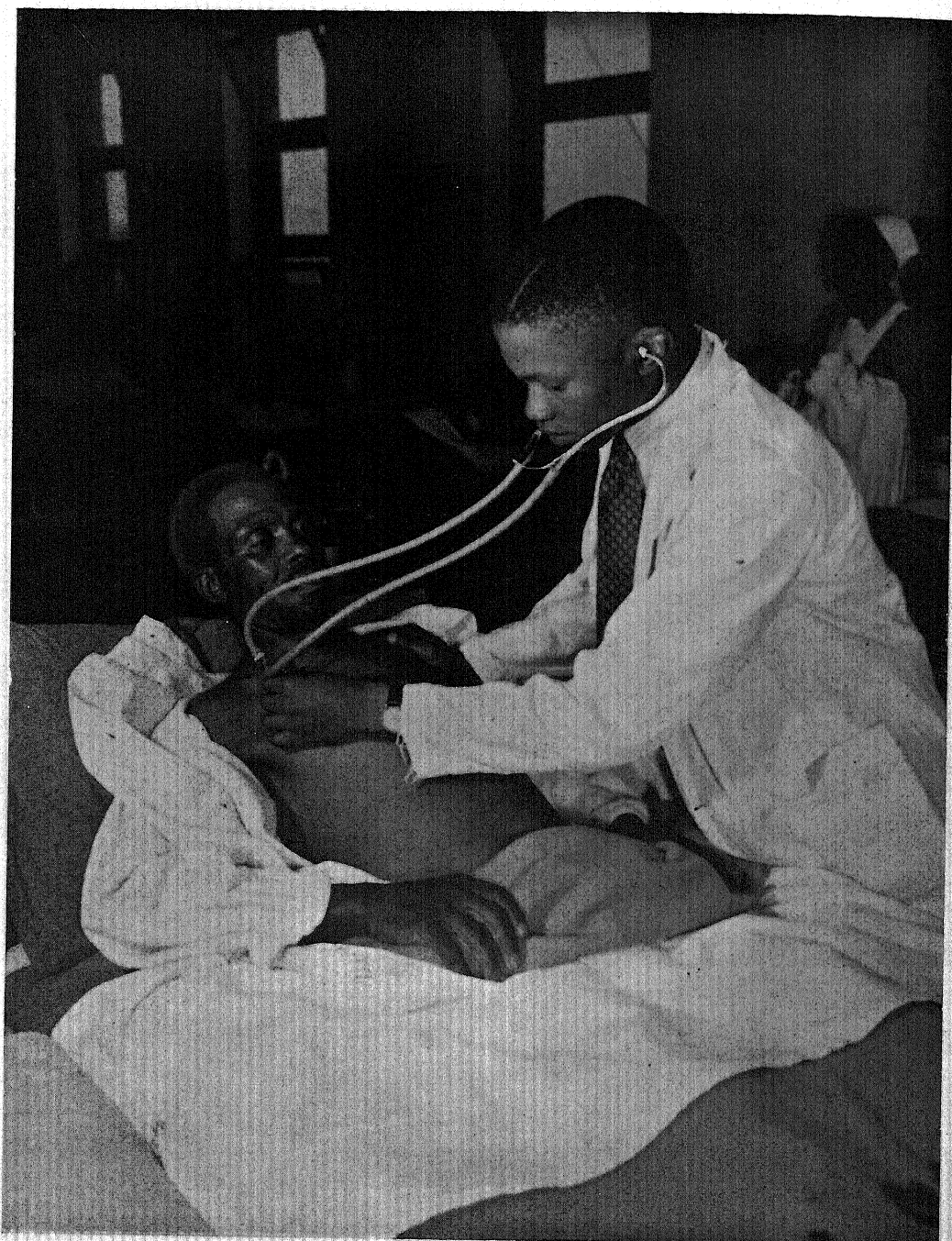
Medical students spend a year at Fort Hare before going on to the Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg, for training as 'Medical Aids' in the Union's health scheme for the Native Reserves.





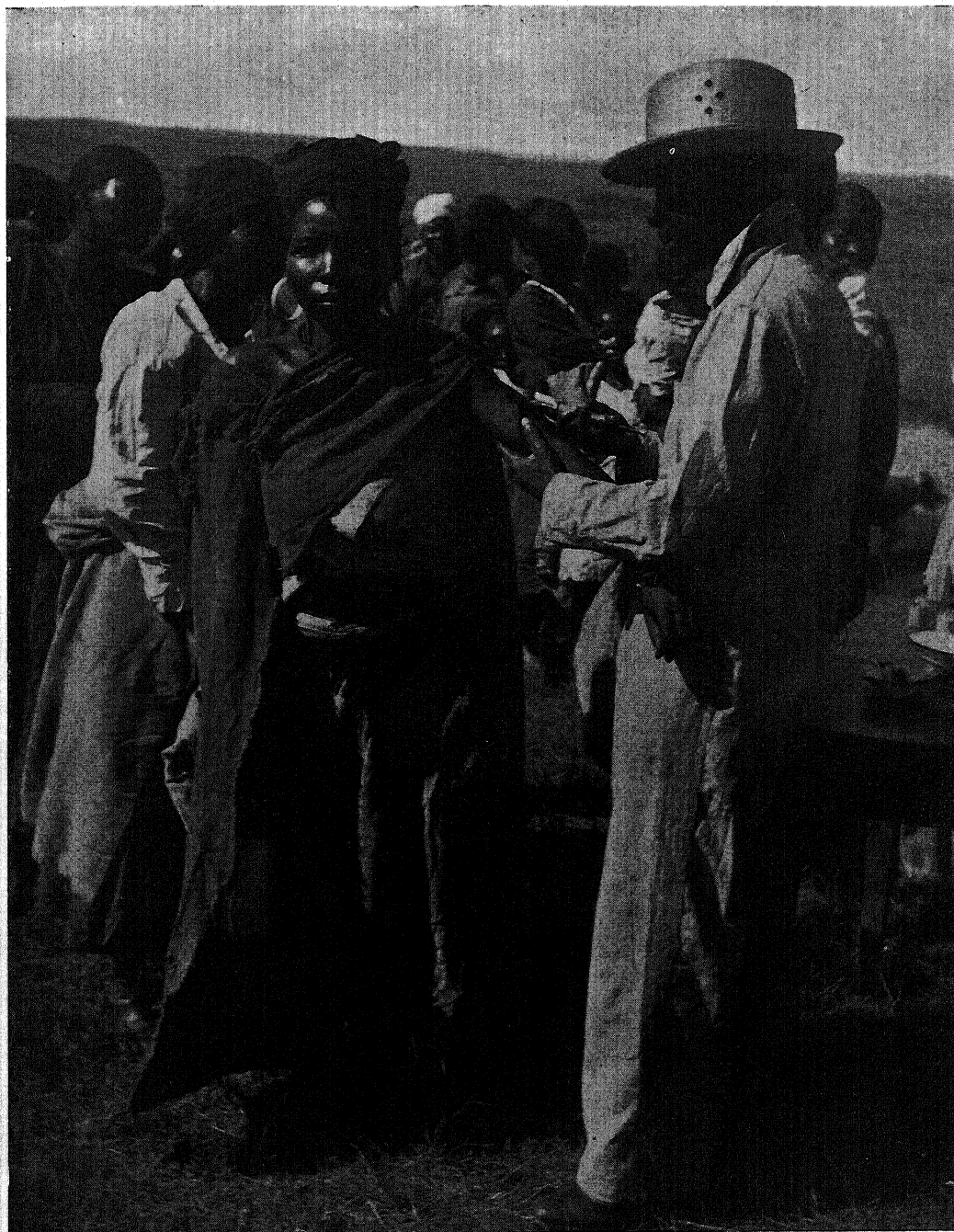
First Africans to qualify as doctors in the Union. They received their training at the Witwatersrand University Medical School.

Dr. H. H. W. Hermanus, aged 26, of Hlobo, Idutywa and Dr. J. L. Z. Njonguee, aged 28, of Culunea, Qumbu District, being congratulated by Professor A. Sutherland Strachan, Acting Dean of the Faculty.

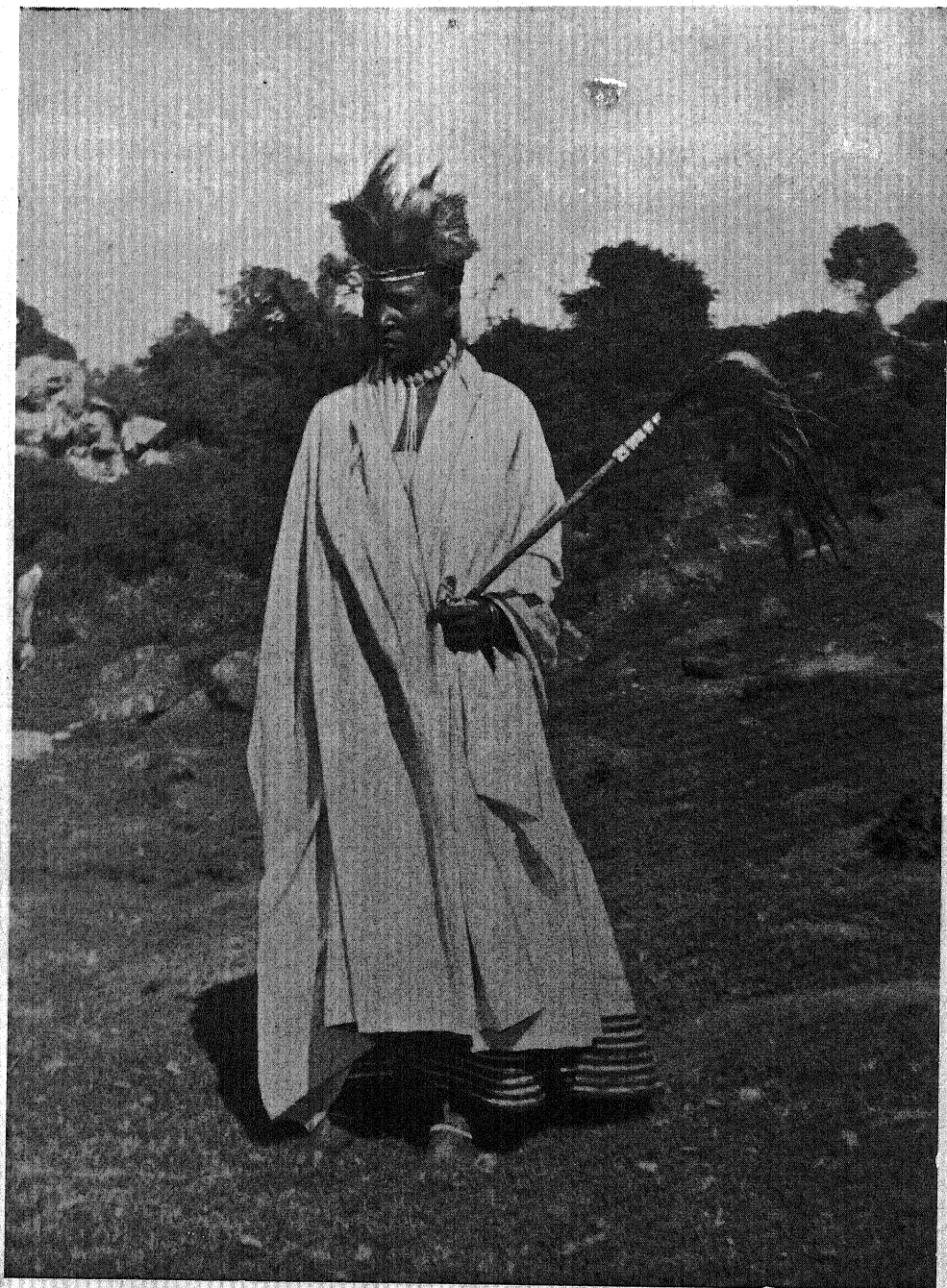


Fear of the unknown can only be overcome by giving to each patient the best that modern practice has to offer.



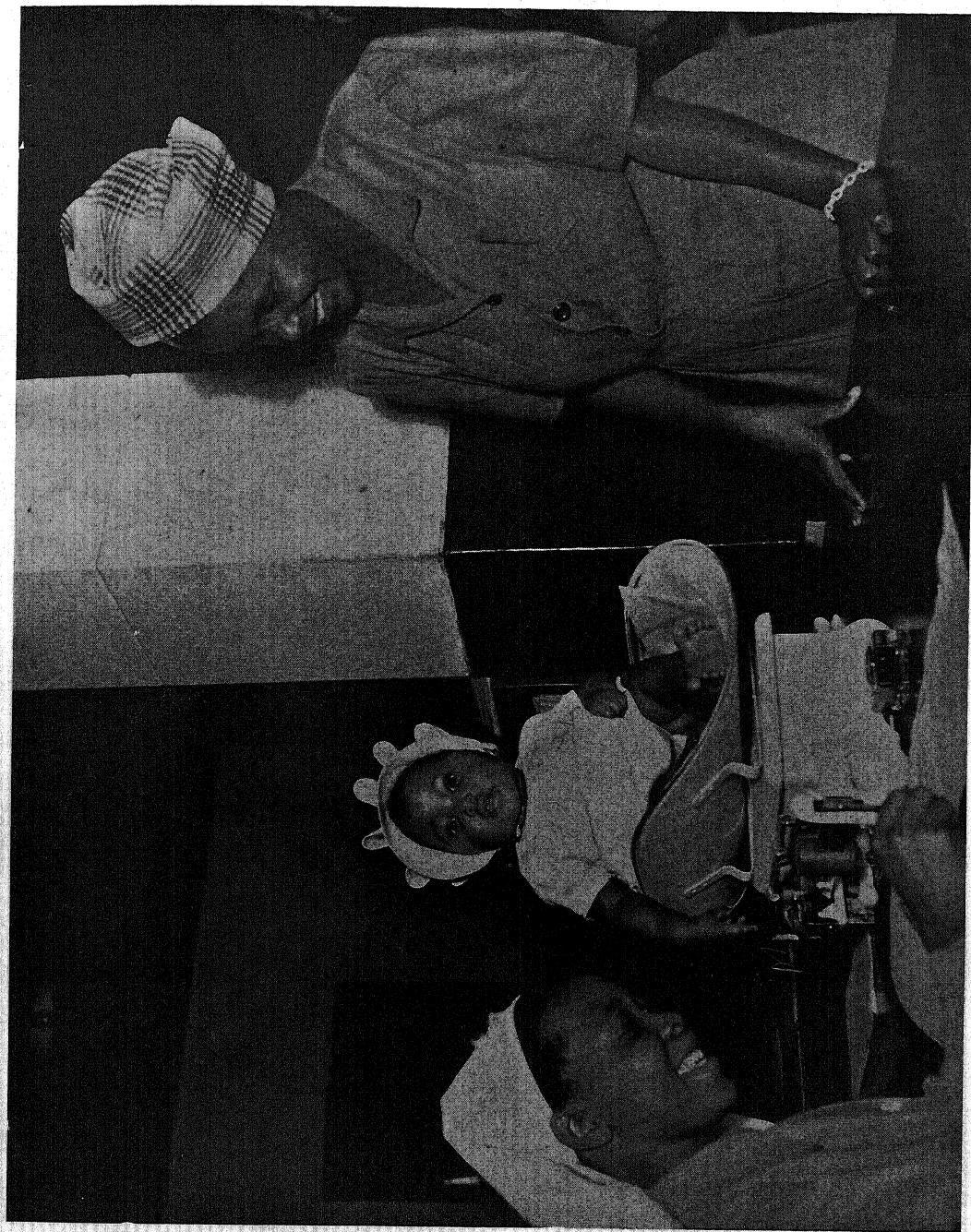


Members of an anti-typhus team at work in a country district.

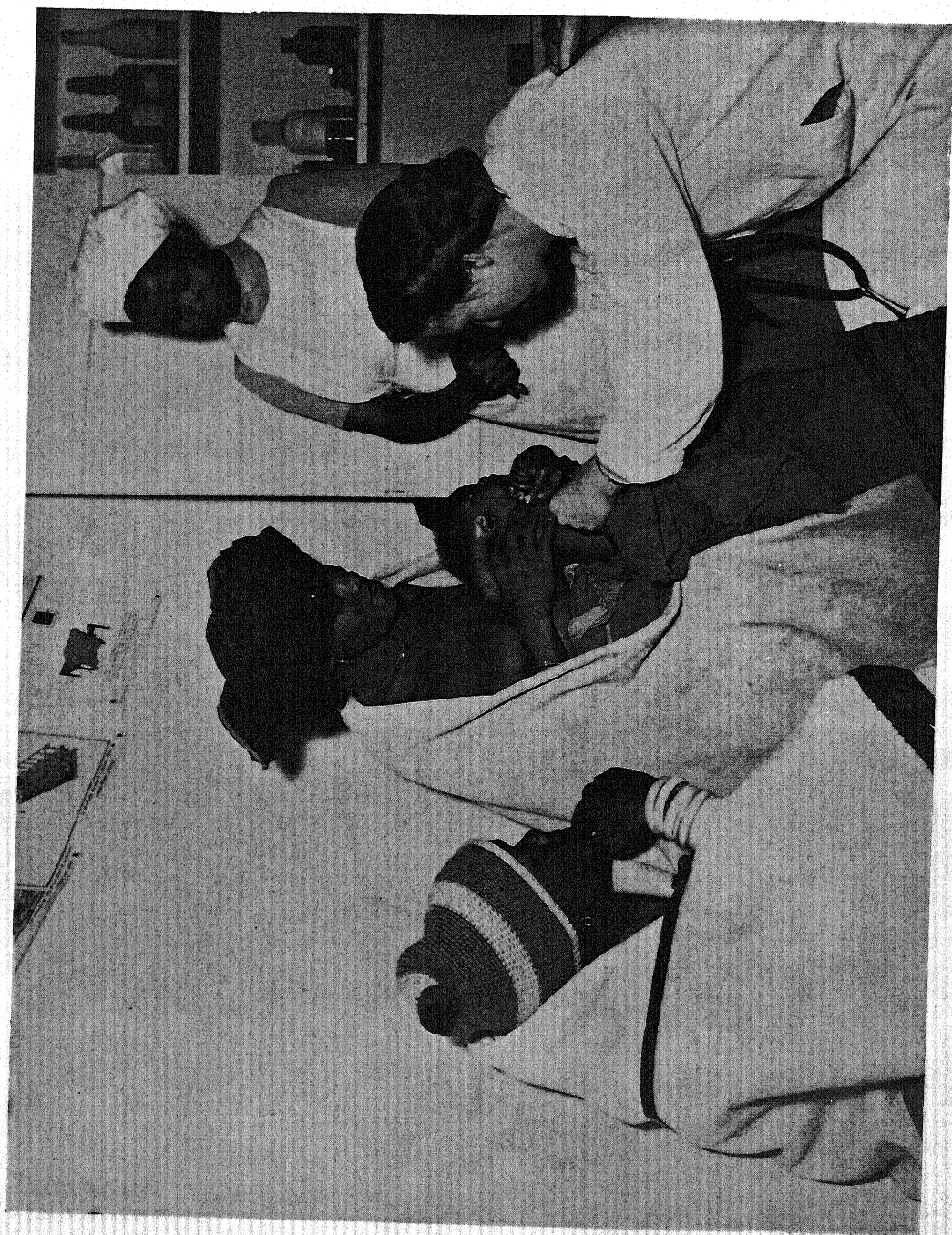


A Witch Doctress whose sombre figure still throws a dark shadow of ignorance and fear over the lives of many.





In urban areas a ceaseless fight must be waged against malnutrition and slum conditions if the high mortality rate amongst Native children is to be checked.

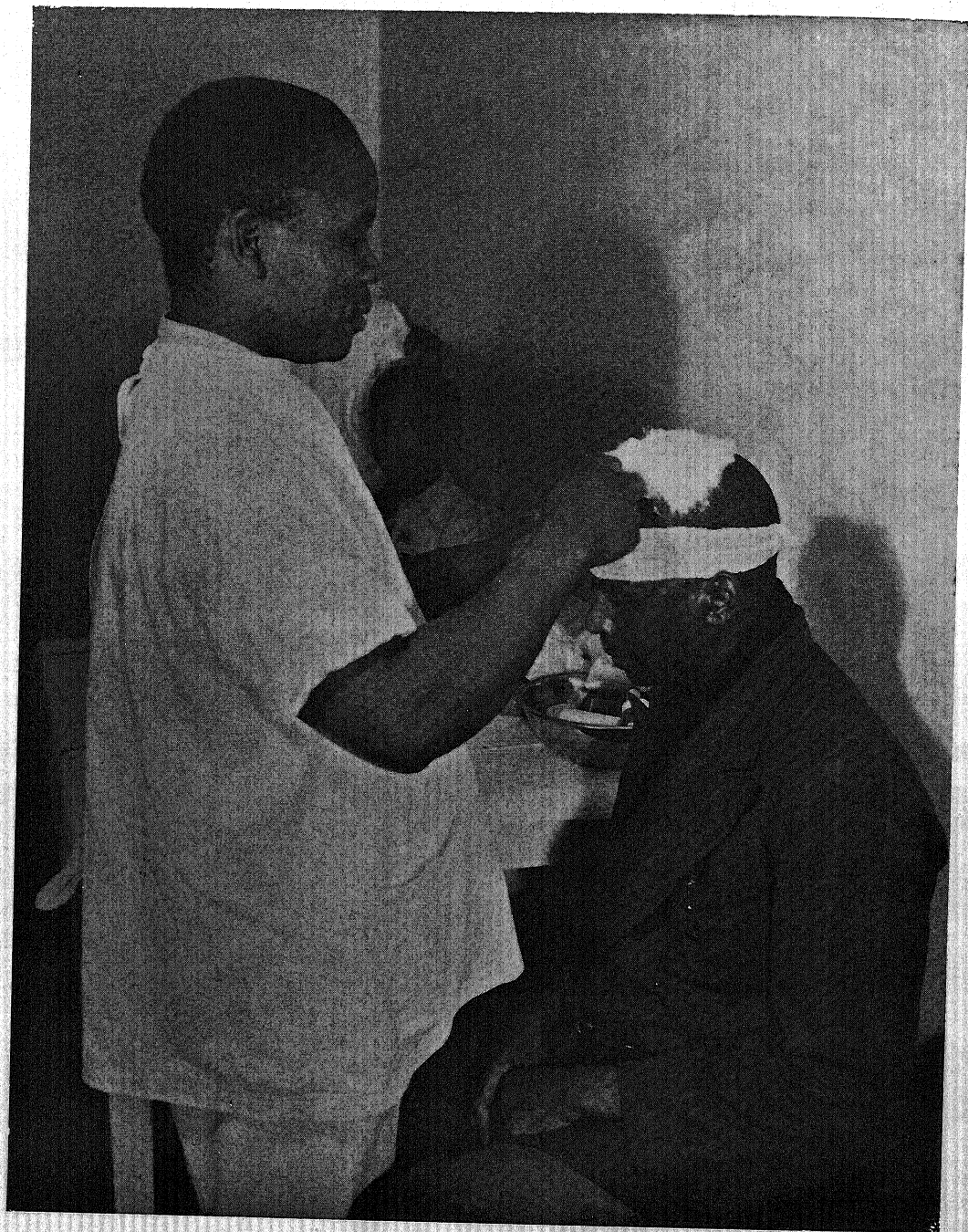


In rural areas the battle is against superstition and ignorance as well as against malnutrition.



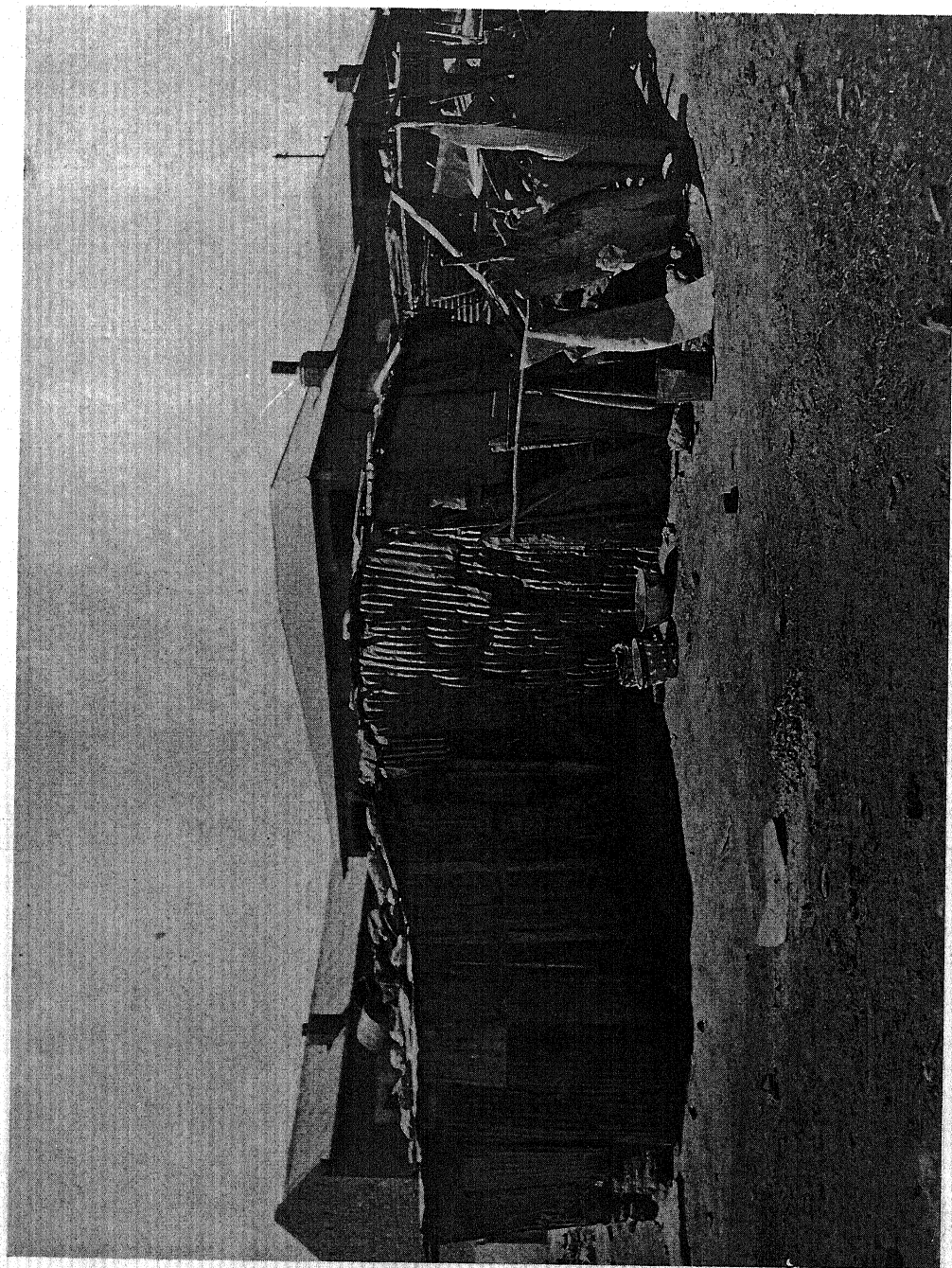


A bottle of medicine changes hands.



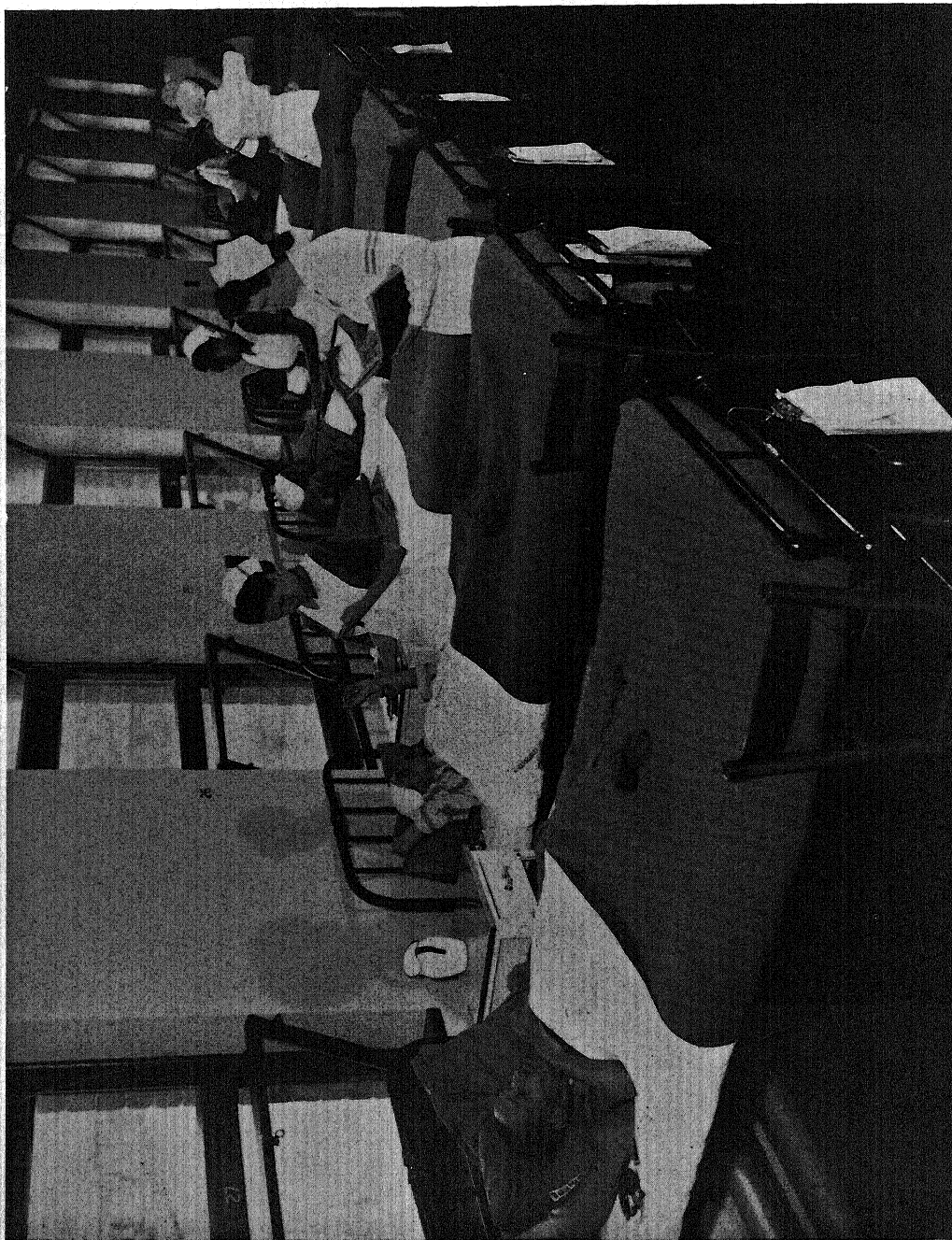
Dr. Xhuma, an African doctor who studied medicine in America, Edinburgh and Vienna, applying a dressing.





As long as backyard, two-roomed residences such as this are inhabited by Natives, health must be at a discount and hospital accommodation at a premium.





## CHAPTER XI

### SOUNDNESS OF THE SOUL

THE SHARP impact of two cultures is bound to have an effect upon the physical stamina of the weaker. African culture is weaker in the sense that the adjustments called for have to be made by the Native and not the European; weaker too in the sense that the Bantu are exposed to previously unknown diseases of the body. To the fact that the clash of the cultures has bred sickness of the body among Africans the last chapter bears witness. Yet they have stood the shock in astonishing fashion. Unlike the aborigines of Australia and the Red Indians of America they have not been overborne and suffered extinction, but have grown and multiplied. Some may contend that this is due to the White man's tenderness in Southern Africa in that he has not shot the Black man down. But to others it is proof of Bantu virility.

It may be averred, however, that spiritually the African Native has shown even greater powers of resistance. The quality of soul he has displayed is worthy of recognition. There is indeed an essential soundness in him.

Some Europeans who know him only in the alien environment of a town or city slum declare the African to be morally degenerate. They think and speak of him as inferior and ever to remain inferior. While it must be conceded that often our locations produce an unlovely type, it is on the other hand unfair to think of these exotic products as true examples of the Bantu soul. Basically the African is sound. The essentials in his make-up have

been sound, and it should be the aim of the West to keep them sound. The African should be judged in his natural habitat.

It is worthy of note that those who made early contact with the Bantu in South Africa had esteem for their qualities. Lichtenstein, the German traveller, visited the Chief Ngqika in the south-east in the early years of last century, and left on record his impressions. He declared that one might say that among the sovereigns of the cultivated nations it would perhaps be difficult to find so many qualities united, worthy of their dignity. 'His fine, tall, well-proportioned form, at the perfect age of six-and-twenty, his open, benevolent, confiding countenance, the simplicity yet dignity of his deportment, the striking readiness of his judgment and of his answers, his frankness and the rational views he took of things;—all these properties combined are not too often to be found among those who, according to our commonly received opinions, have had infinitely greater advantages in the forming (of) their persons and minds.'

From the time of the first missionary contacts with the Bantu respect for their intellectual qualities was engendered. The stamina of their intellectual qualities, it was declared more than a century ago, might be said to be good. Though, in the natural condition, they were entirely destitute of education, and of every species of learning, yet their minds were neither blunt nor dwarfish. They were found to be quick to apprehend, shrewd to discover an error, and could readily appreciate an argument when it was set before them. Again, they were declared to be an interesting race, with many social virtues, which it would benefit the most civilized to possess. As early as 1823 a missionary, while noting the barbarous customs of



the Bantu added, 'Yet they are a fine race of people, and nothing but religion and civilization are wanting to exalt them in the scale of being—to raise them to the true dignity of human nature.' The poet Pringle, who knew them intimately, declared that they were barbarians but not savages in the strict and proper sense of the term, and instanced how in war they spared women, both Black and White. It was noted how they would not even cry when suffering under the greatest torture.

There are those who have had cause to respect their mental powers in our modern time. Some instances may illustrate this.

A teacher was relating to a group of young Africans the story of King Herod's promise to give Salome anything she asked, up to the half of his Kingdom, and how grieved was the king when the damsel asked for the head of her mother's enemy, John the Baptist.

'What would you have said to the request had you been in the king's place?' the teacher demanded.

Without hesitation came a pupil's answer: 'I would have said that the Baptist's head belonged to the half of the kingdom I did not promise.'

Many of us have read the story times without number and pondered how the king might have freed himself from the horns of his dilemma, but perhaps none of us has had the wit of the young African to see so obvious a way of escape.

Some visitors from overseas were discussing with Protectorate Natives the advantages that would accrue to Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland were these Territories incorporated in the Union of South Africa, instead of being under the British Crown as at present.

'Think,' said the stranger, 'how much the big brother could do for you, the little brother.'

The argument was gone with the wind when a poorly clad African at the back of the crowd uttered three words: 'Cain and Abel.'

About 1925 a Government Commission went through South Africa seeking to explain to the Native people that poll-tax of £1 per head was to be levied on all Natives, and that the sum obtained through the tax would be paid into a 'Native Development Account,' from which the costs of Native education and other services for Africans would be met. The Natives were badly in need of such services and this would procure them. At a large gathering a simple-looking African asked that the whole scheme be explained to him again.

'Is it,' he asked at last, 'the intention of Government to take this £1 from every Native and then later to hand it back to them for their own welfare?'

'Exactly,' was the answer.

'Then it seems to me,' he said with unmoved countenance, 'that it is as if I said to my dog, "You are a poor, miserable, half-starved beast. I must find some food for you. Come, let me cut off your tail and give it to you to eat."''

A further proof of Bantu soundness of mind is found in the wealth of their proverbial lore, using that in no narrow sense. There is a richness of expression in this field, coupled with a sanity of judgment, that could only come from an inner life essentially wholesome. Here are a few examples:

*When the chief limps, all his subjects limp also.*

(When a chief is bad, all his subjects go wrong too.)

*One does not shorten cattle's horns on one side only.*

(One does not believe in one side of a story only.)

*The goat suffering from scabs rubs itself against the poles of the kraal.*

(A person who has stolen usually defends himself by accusing others.)

*The cow licks the one that licks her.*

(One good turn deserves another.)

*They have beaten the bush, they have not beaten the hare.*

(They have missed the culprit in a matter.)

*Once a baboon has tasted honey it does not touch earth again.*

(Once a man has occupied a high position, he does not accept an inferior one.)

*An elephant does not die of one broken rib.*

(A strong man does not lose heart because of a single misfortune.)

*It is better to turn back the enemy on the hill than to drive him out of the village.*

(Prevention is better than cure.)

Apart, however, from intellectual qualities there are qualities of heart which tell of an attractive and lovable people.

Who that has lived in South Africa for several years has not experienced the loyalty and devotion of the Bantu retainer? Get the unspoiled African into your service, treat him as a human being, win his respect, and by ten chances to one you will find you have gained one to whom your interests will be as dear as his own. The advice he will give you, especially about dealing with his own



people, will save you from many a pitfall. The loyalty of the Bantu to those they esteem has something touching in its fidelity.

During the three years of the Anglo-Boer war, on hundreds of farms where the women and children were left without the protection of their men folk, African servants loyally protected the interests of their absent masters, and even to-day, in any given month, in any given town or village, Europeans on leave entrust all their worldly possessions to the care of African servants and very rarely have occasion to regret their trust.

One of the most attractive traits is the communism that is truly African. Put into the hands of a boy that opens a gate something that can be shared with others, and you will see it quickly divided among his fellows. Anything brought down in the chase, though it be but a mouse or a tiny bird, is never eaten alone, if others have shared in the hunt. The Bantu will divide up his last morsel with a friend in need. Even in favourable times many would perish of hunger were it not for this co-partnership. In times of famine it is the saving of thousands. The individualism of the West, as acquired by the Bantu in towns and cities, is the destruction of a glorious heritage.

Who has not envied Bantu grace and manners? Out in the veld the Bantu walks with ease and poise. The carriage, whether of man or woman, is a delight to the eye. Not seldom a man most poorly clothed has the bearing of an aristocrat. And how tawdry often seem European manners as compared with the politeness of even the untutored child of the veld. The Bantu as he addresses one whom he esteems will never say, 'You'. It is 'the master' or 'the doctor'. 'Is the master well?' 'Will

the doctor get a holiday?' You offer some small gift—even so insignificant as a threepenny bit—and both hands are held out to receive it. It would be impolite to accept with one hand your present as if it were a thing of no account. Sometimes what seems impolite to a European is the best of good manners to a Native, and the latter's point of view often has logic on its side. Set a loaded table before some Africans and they will eat everything on it, even though the last stages be full of discomfort for themselves. Their thought is that to leave anything would be to give the impression that they count the meal a faulty one. To clear the table is a polite way of saying how good the feast has been.

Bantu sense of justice is one of their most impressive traits. Nothing wounds their soul more than an unfounded charge of wrong-doing. The man who would punish must be absolutely sure that the wrong for which the punishment is given has been committed—and be able to prove it in a legal way. But if wrong has been done there need be no fear of resentment at the punishment inflicted. More likely the culprit will say that the one who pronounced the sentence is a man. 'Their sentences are so just that we do not feel them,' is a favourite expression concerning an exacting magistrate or chief. Not once nor twice have I seen an African punished for a fault, and when, soon after, public opportunity was offered for derogatory speech concerning the one who gave the sentence, no word of disparagement was uttered, but rather lavish if discerning praise.

Few traits of African character are more enviable than their abundant cheerfulness and humour. The Bantu is naturally of sunny disposition. He laughs long and heartily, with the slightest cause. His sense of fun is

keen and is easily stirred. Even when his circumstances seem most depressing, as when rain has drenched him and he is cold and comfortless, his cheerfulness breaks out. In the face of drawbacks and disabilities he makes the best of life and remains a cheerful and even happy being. Someone has well said that the African people's playfulness is a 'tonic for sick folk, which fortunately is not measured out in teaspoons'.

The African's adaptability is often a source of wonder to those who have watched him at work. Few races have so quickly adjusted themselves to an alien environment as have the Africans who have become enmeshed in Western civilization. With quickness they master the appliances and gadgets of the European home in which they serve or the complicated machinery of factory or mine in which they work. In a land whose traditional modes of travel were by foot or slow-moving ox-wagon, the African has adapted himself easily to the new and quicker ways of train and car and lorry. Indeed, one of the modern problems of South Africa is how to satisfy the African crowd's desire to travel, so travel-minded have the people become. With a hundred things of the new civilization claiming some change in their ways or the mastery of new techniques, they are found not wanting, but ready to adjust themselves to the new conditions.

Does the European population of South Africa understand how a passion for education has swept tribe after tribe in Southern Africa? The demand for western education among the Native people has long been greater than the supply. Just over twenty years ago a sum of nearly £340,000 per annum was being spent on Native education in the Union. To-day the sum is £4,500,000, but the tale is still the same of thousands excluded from



school who wish to be there. From educational institutions like Lovedale literally hundreds are being turned away every year. From end to end of the land, where the Bantu dwell in any numbers, the country is studded with little schools. Most of these have been erected by the Natives themselves out of their poverty. In equipment such schools are often pathetically wanting. So insistent has been the African demand for education on European farms that many farmers now see that they cannot avoid scarcity of labour unless they are prepared to provide schools for the children of their employees. The authorities of Native boarding schools can cite innumerable instances of dire sacrifice on the part of African parents that their children might have schooling. It was the writer's lot to receive week after week a postal order for 10s., sent by a labourer in a country town, out of his scanty wages, as instalments for his daughter's educational fees. He knew so little of postal orders as a medium of exchange that he always filled in the name of the payee on the line where the latter's signature must be written. But the order never failed to come. In educational matters too it is one of the tokens of Bantu soundness of soul that they have scorned examinations designed to meet their supposed lower capabilities. In nursing, for example, they have demanded that they be made to tackle the same examinations as White nurses do. When the University College at Fort Hare was being planned there was consternation in some African circles because it was imagined that proposals were afoot to have courses different and lower in standard than are found in universities catering for White youth. The protests of the Bantu lacked nothing in vehemence.

To some the supreme token of Bantu soundness of soul is found in their ready acceptance of the Christian faith. It is not a century and a half since the first missionary met them in the eastern border country, and yet to-day half of the Bantu population of the Union class themselves as Christian. It is one of the modern triumphs of the Nazarene. That a people so conservative as regards traditional ways and often so bitter against the White invaders, should have forsaken their ancient religious forms and recognised the worth of the new teaching the conquerors brought, is a tribute to Bantu judgment in deepest things. To some, however, it is not the widespread acceptance of the Faith that is the great token of health. In a number of its features Bantu church life, viewed as a whole, has its deep disappointments. The multiplication of Native sects—now hundreds in number—is a blot on South African ecclesiastical history. The ethical standard too in some churches is low.

But—and the tragedy is that South Africa's segregation policy makes countless Europeans live in ignorance of the fact—the Christian Faith has produced among the dark-skinned Africans its miracles. Anyone who has come close to the Bantu, who has known them as they can be known only when the heart is revealed, knows that they have their examples of the heights to which character can come under the power of the Christian message. If this is a side of life that seems closed and barred to any reader, let him seek such a book as the recent *Godfrey Callaway: His Life and Writings*. There, in pages that charm by their beauty and truth, by their realistic understanding of how life can sink, and yet by their nearness to the laughter and tears in mortal things, they will find more than one who is no other than mankind's greatest product—a saint.

## CHAPTER XII

### SOME POPULAR MISUNDERSTANDINGS

AT ONE of our Native educational institutions there lingers a story that a European master-carpenter, hailing from Scotland, was being assisted by an African apprentice in fitting a large pane of glass into a window-frame. The African was pushing the glass into position a little too pressingly and the master exclaimed, 'Hover a blink.' The African pushed all the more, only to find himself soundly rated for his failure to understand the King's English!

The story has its humorous side, but it is not without seriousness, because although extreme, it is typical of misunderstandings that by the hundred are happening daily all over South Africa. Too often we credit — or debit — the African with stupidity when all the while his failure to act as we wish him to do is simply that he does not understand the language we use.

To the European it seems a heaping up of difficulties that no fewer than seven Bantu languages are in use in South Africa, but the disadvantages are not all on one side. For an untutored Native to come from a secluded part into a city like Johannesburg it can be no easy task to make himself understood by fellow-Africans whose tongue is different from his own. But added to all, untutored though we know him to be, we Europeans expect him to follow instructions in one if not two languages that have no affinity with his mother tongue.



Despite the advantage of superior education not one European in a thousand seriously endeavours to bridge the language gulf between the races. The bridging is left to the Native, and if the bridge conveying our intentions and instructions should prove rickety, it is we Europeans who become impatient and unreasonable. So often when we say an African is stupid, misunderstanding is due to the fact that we have not made our wishes known with clarity. But seldom do we credit him with the possibility that he did not understand us.

One of the things urgently demanded of all South African Whites is that, if they cannot use the African's own language, their instructions to him, if not interpreted, should be of the simplest and clearest kind, and that pains be taken to make sure that everything is understood. If misunderstanding follows, quick conclusions should not be drawn of the African's mental incapacity; rather remembrance should be had of how in bridging the gulf it may well be expected that the European, with his learning and knowledge of the world, should come more than half-way across.

A common fallacy is that the African is lazy. Admittedly, he generally lacks the dispatch of the European. Over his work he seems to dawdle. The fact that the Bantu male loves nothing better than sitting at a cattlekraal wall discussing the affairs of the day or in listening to debate on tribal concerns at the 'great place' of the chief, has given the impression that he lacks manly energy. Frequently too it is cited how he goes to the mines, and, after nine months there, returns home to lounge about his village for a spell.

Putting aside the question whether the rewards given for his labour are any inducement to the African to be

energetic, certain facts deserve remembrance. Undoubtedly the climate of Africa has not tended to produce men with the active qualities of Nordic people who have to battle with the elements. In some ways life is easy to the African, and it has bred a philosophy and an outlook that see no need for rush. 'To-morrow also is a day,' is typical of the mind of Africa, which is not yet inured to clocks: the sun rules the day, and it has no appearance of hurry! Tribal custom, too, especially since the *Pax Britannica* has abolished war, and the game for which they hunted has been cut off, has tended to make the men still fonder of debate. But to see men spending hours in discussion does not necessarily mean that we may charge them with a lazy strain, else our parliamentarians would be in evil case! At the same time, slowness of movement and love of easy ways may, at least in part, bear another interpretation. African diet has not tended to give an overplus of energy. It is an open secret that, when thousands of young men reach the mines, for some time they are unfitted for the heavy work waiting to be done. They must for days be adequately fed before strength is sufficient for the task. In other cases some disease is found to have them in its grip—hookworm or another hidden malady—so that their vitality is gone. But with many it is a simple case of malnutrition. As for lounging at the village, it would surprise the outsider how many tasks in kraal or field a man must perform each day. On the other hand, there are medical men who aver that did not the mine labourer, who has his spells underground, have his months among the hills of home, his life would be worth but little purchase. It is the breathing-spaces that enable him to go on through the years of his prime. But, however these considerations may appeal or be rejected, none can deny that the burden

of South Africa's heavy labour is borne on the shoulders of the race so often dubbed as lazy. Some of us believe that it is not laziness which accounts for African slowness. He is not essentially lazy. The climate, the habits of years spent under a tropical or semi-tropical sun, and the physical deterioration which modern conditions have induced account for much.

A prolific source of misunderstanding between the Bantu and the European is that the latter has so seldom made a serious attempt to understand African mentality and background. We condemn because we do not grasp aright. Attitude of mind, custom and habit are foreign to us, and often to our thought blameworthy, because we do not know the Bantu soul.

We see a Bantu man walk on a path carrying only a stick. Behind him comes a woman bowed down with bundles. Inwardly, if not audibly, we dub him a lazy fellow, not knowing that we are looking at something which immemorial custom and circumstance have sanctioned and fostered. The day was when to travel was unsafe because of wild beasts and wilder men, so the man went in front with arms free and in the role of protector. In most parts of the country the cause has gone, but the habit lingers.

Again, misunderstandings arise because we do not realize the value Africans put on deliberation and patience. We Europeans are always in haste and have a deep sense of the worth of time. To the Bantu it is of the essence of politeness not to be hurried. A matter is submitted to us for advice or decision. We seek to master the facts with speed, ask a few short questions, pronounce judgment and dismiss the business for ever. According to our light, we have done our best, but the Bantu are not impressed and indeed they may be hurt because we have disposed

of their affair so speedily. Had we cared more, they argue, we would not have been so hasty. When an unfavourable decision on our part seems inevitable, the blow is often softened if we defer judgment to a future day. The fact that we do so is taken as a sign that we think the matter of importance, and in addition we have conformed to more leisurely and mannerly African ways.

It is commonly alleged that Africans have no gratitude. That a whole race should be so labelled is mostly due to misunderstanding. No doubt among them there are glaring examples of ingrates, as among all races, but there is probably no one in touch with the Bantu and enjoying their esteem who does not recall instances of gratitude unspeakably affecting. Frequently by their deeds Africans reveal that they do not forget. And their word can penetrate the heart. Father Callaway tells how, when a Pandomisi matron was presented with a shawl from the daughter of Bishop Key, she exclaimed, 'I thank for myself, but I thank for my children too. I shall soon be laid in the grave, so I thank for my children too.' The charge of ingratitude is often due ultimately to the fact that a paternal attitude marks the European in his dealing with the Natives. He is their 'father', and everything conspires to keep them mindful of this. And in their simple minds, as in the sophisticated minds of children in European families, it does not occur to them to give their father 'thanks'. It is not done.

Most common of all sources of misunderstanding is the fact that we are unreasonable and unimaginative with a people who, in two generations, have had thrust upon them all the implications of a new and advanced culture. We somehow expect them to be 'at home' in a milieu that is new and often alarming. We forget that they are



wandering in a strange world of whose ways they are not master.

Consider what our insistence on up-to-the-minute punctuality must mean to them. To the Bantu this time factor is something alien. An African who did not possess a watch asked his brother African the time. The proud possessor of a wrist watch consulted his time-piece and gravely announced, 'My goodness! Exactly a quarter past a minute.' We smile, but we expect the African to do better than 'a quarter past a minute' when we require hot water, tea and service. Yet, when it suits our purpose, we ourselves are quite ready to allow him to lapse into Africa's age-old disdain of the time factor. The truth is we are out of step with him in all this, and our actions are as puzzling to the African as his actions are to us.

A new houseboy is engaged. Never before has he been inside a European dwelling. To him electric light, water laid on, a refrigerator, a vacuum cleaner, an electric stove and toaster, a slow combustion stove, and a host of other appliances are quite unknown. Through lack of imagination and of sympathy we do not put ourselves in his place. We think nothing of his wonderment at the multitude and newness of the equipment he must handle. When we come down on the first morning and discover that, in his effort to perform the allotted task of sweeping the kitchen, he had come in before dawn and wasted an hour and also a box of matches in a vain endeavour to set the electric bulb alight, we are filled with impatience and conclude that he is 'no use'.

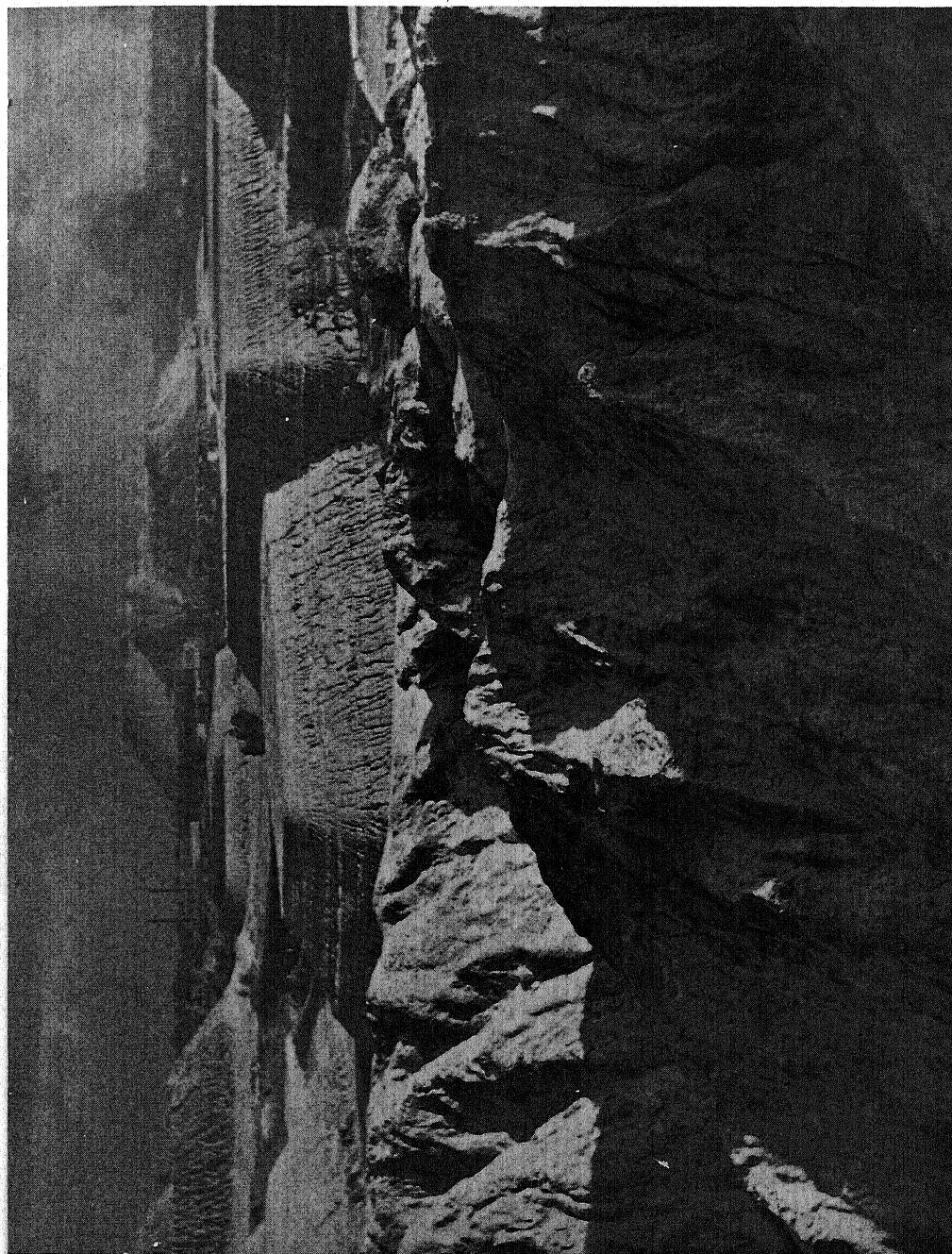
We shall never avoid misunderstanding with the Bantu till we remember that we have led them to live in a time and scene of tremendous change. Unsophisticated country folk as they are, we have made them in their

thousands to be industrialised. We have bereft them of their land and so forced them to the cities, where we have compelled them to live in dreary locations or in compounds, with the latter's unnatural conditions of life and all its problems of a mental, sexual and social kind. They are largely out on an uncharted sea, but we wonder at their unsteady hands as they grasp the rudders of their frail ships. To put ourselves in their place is surely to know more of patience and goodwill.



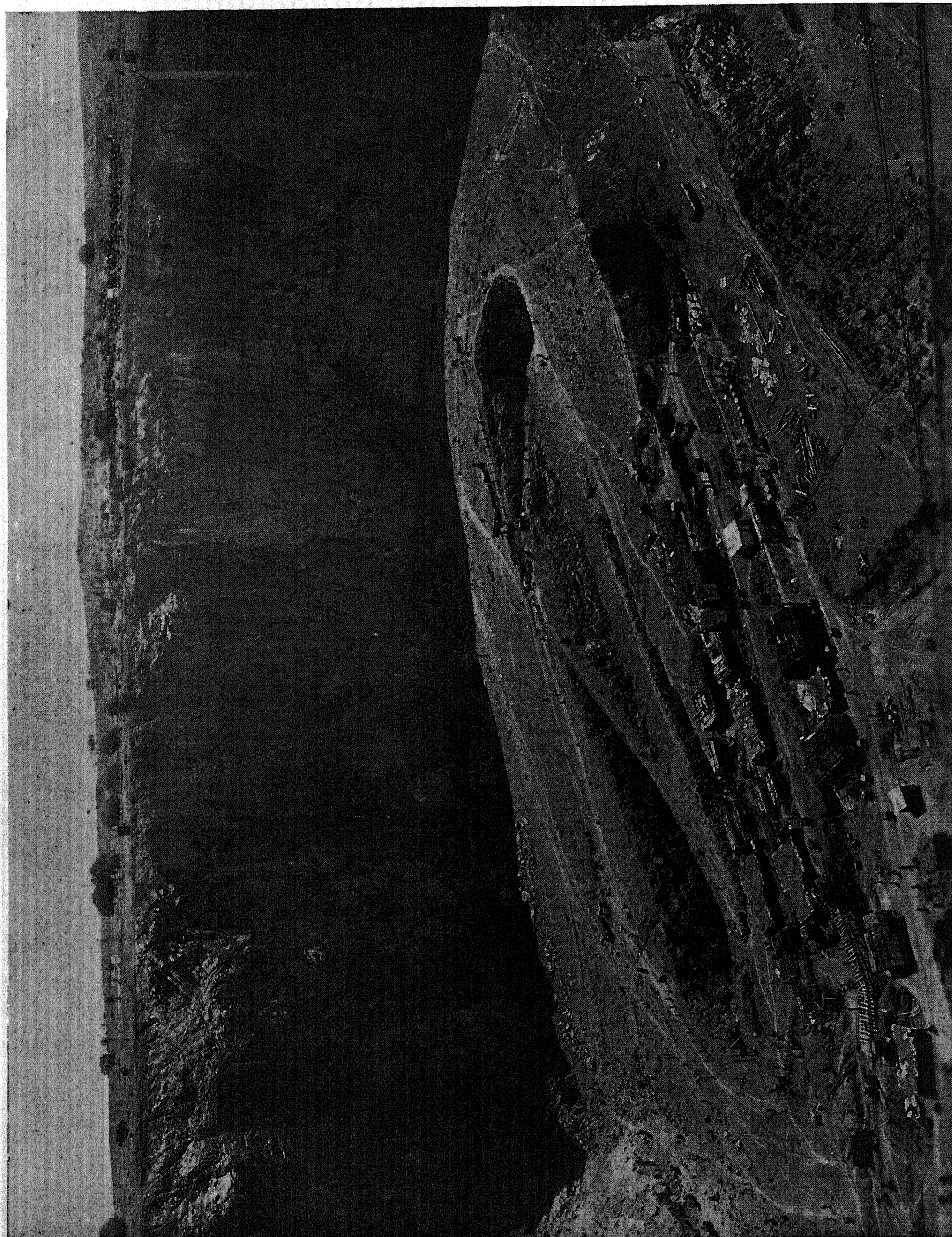
In less than seventy years, could two million Europeans alone have built modern South Africa? Twelve thousand miles of railways.

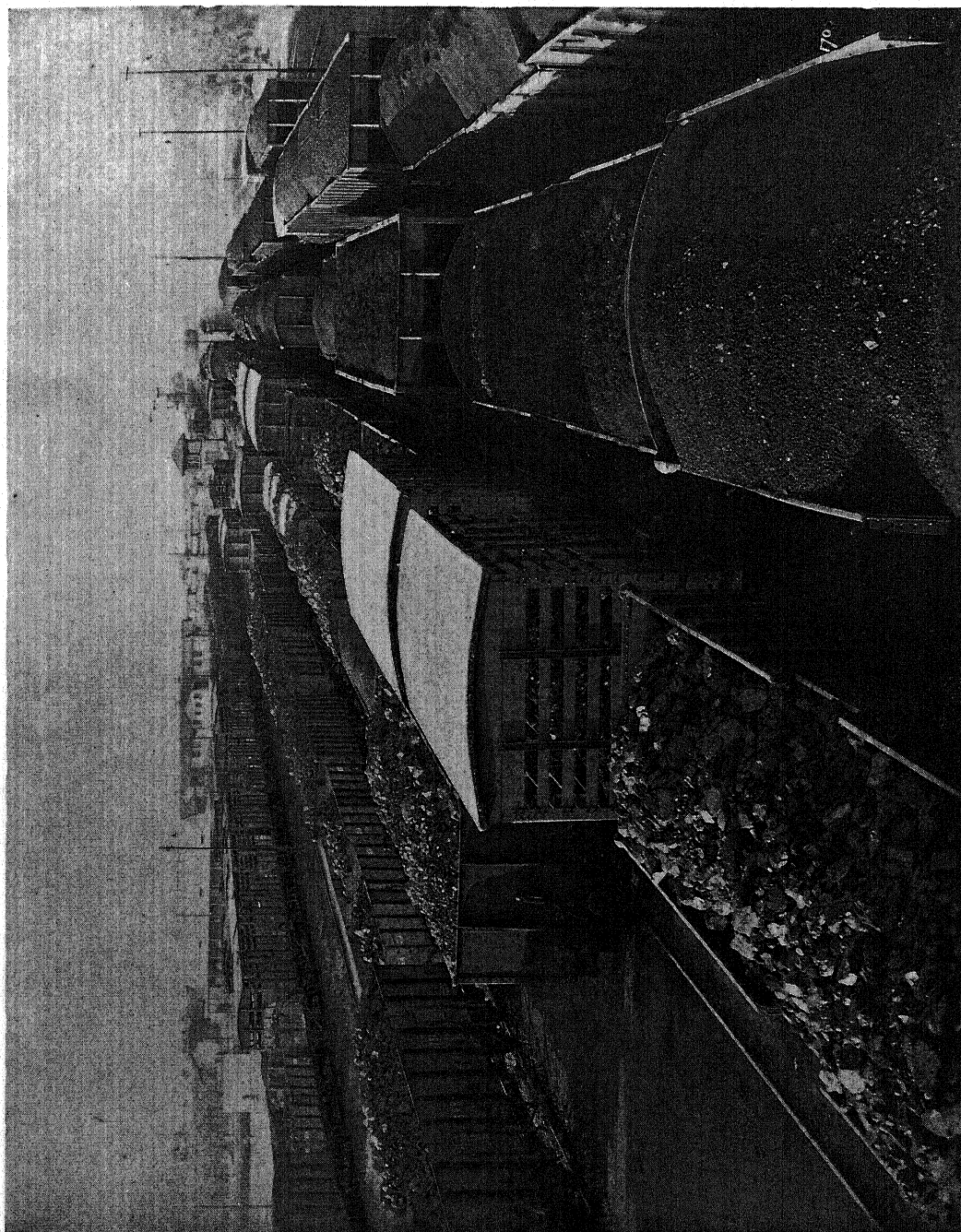




Africans helped to build the greatest gold-mining industry in the world.

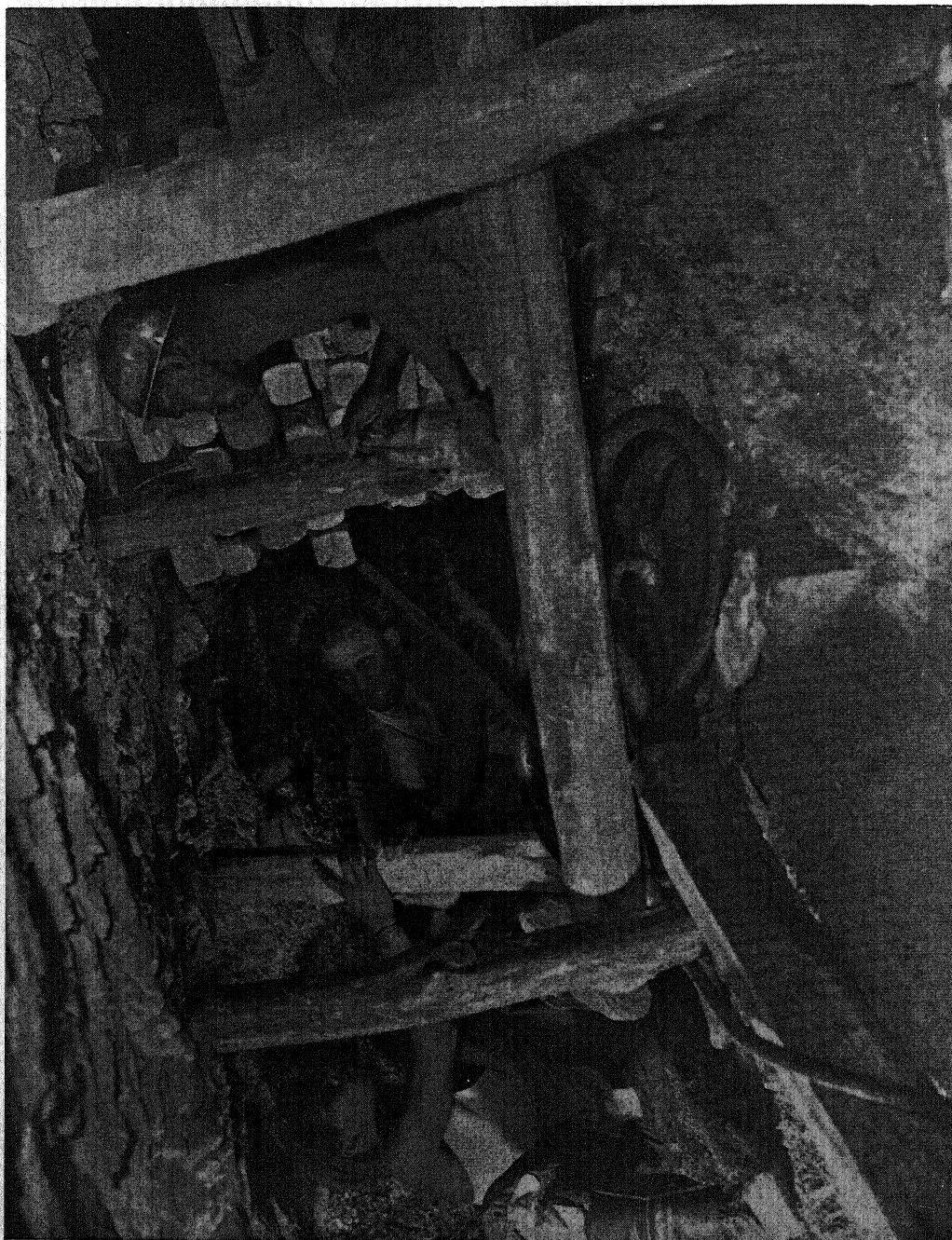






But for the African would there have been the endless trainloads of coal for homes and industries, for the bunkers of ships that sailed in defence of democracy and of those now carrying the commodities of peace?





Underground, the ratio of workers is one European to twelve Natives.



From the four Provinces of the Union and from six neighbouring territories, a vast human tide ebbs and flows to provide manpower to release mineral wealth, which in its turn feeds the economic life of the Union.



## CHAPTER XIII

### SOME GREAT AFRICANS

WHEN European children in South Africa read of Africans in their history books, it is generally of sinister and despotic figures leading in tribal wars or in wars against the Whites. Makana, who stormed Grahams-town and frightened its White inhabitants: Chaka who murdered by the thousand and desolated Natal: Mzilikazi and Lobengula who were the terrors of the north: Nongqawuse who destroyed thousands of her people and their stock by absurd prophecies about driving the White man into the sea — these and other figures fill the stage, and give our children early and indelible impressions of the place of the Black man in their country's history. The tyrants have no redeeming characteristics. The part Chaka played in making a strong nation of an obscure people and laying the foundations of Zulu discipline and reliability to-day is passed over with brief mention. Even a master statesman like Moshoeshe, who welded together a mixed mob and made his country impregnable against European arms, is described so often as a figure of tyranny with a bias against the farmers of the Free State. Seldom is it mentioned, for example, that Moshoeshe wrote what is considered to be the cleverest letter ever penned in South Africa. We shall repeat the story, for its revelation of Bantu attitude and aptitude. A Governor with his British forces came against the Basotho Chief's stronghold, demanding that the raiding of the Basotho be atoned for by payment of 10,000 head of horned cattle and 1,000

horses, to be delivered in three days. Moshoeshoe sent 3,500 cattle, saying he could do no better. The Governor's forces advanced in three divisions on the Chief's mountain fastness. Each division was soundly beaten, and the Governor decided on withdrawal with the cattle he had captured. It was a triumph for Moshoeshoe, who however cared more for peace and the ultimate integrity of his country. So in the dead of night he got one of the French missionaries to write a letter to his defeated foe:

Thaba Bosiu,  
Midnight,  
December 20th, 1852.

Your Excellency,

This day you have fought against my people and taken much cattle. As the object for which you have come is to have compensation for the Boers, I beg you will be satisfied with what you have taken. I entreat peace from you. You have chastised, let it be enough, I pray you; and let me be no longer considered an enemy to the Queen. I will try all I can to keep my people in order for the future.

Your humble servant,  
MOSHOSHOE.

The letter did its work. The British army marched away. But our children to-day hardly hear of this superb diplomacy.

Seldom indeed are the constructive figures of Native life portrayed. Seldom are the big men the race has thrown up given their meed of honour, and set before our children to win their interest and esteem.

We would mention a few, while remembering that the subject of this chapter could be adequately treated only in a substantial book. In making our choice, which may seem arbitrary and even invidious, we select not mainly chiefs and those who have attained academic distinction, but also those, who in humbler ways have made a contribution for the advancement of the land which they and we

know as home. Let it be said, however, that on the academic side, the achievement of the Southern Bantu has in recent years been considerable. At the South African Native College, Fort Hare, more than three hundred and fifty in late years have obtained degrees of the University of South Africa. But we think rather of those who by some original contribution or lonely stand have registered advance for the race from which they sprang.

We take our first two examples from a far-back time, and find them in men who stood out from their fellows in choosing the pioneer's way.

#### NTSIKANA

Among the first converts to Christianity in south-west Africa was a man of no common kind. To-day he is a legendary figure among his people, who believe that he prophesied the coming of the White race in great numbers, the advent of railway trains and many other wonders. Ntsikana could neither read nor write, but there came from his spirit, nearly one hundred and thirty years ago, the greatest hymn that has sprung from among his countrymen. He repeated it to his people until they could retain it in their memories, and missionaries as early as the 'twenties of last century gave it the permanence of print. To this day it is sung by multitudes, often with tremendous effect on the hearers. It is the famous *Ulo Thixo Omkhulu Ngosezulkwini*, or, as it has been translated:

He, the great God, high in Heaven,  
Great 'I am,' of truth the Buckler,  
Great 'I am,' of truth the Stronghold,  
Great 'I am,' in whom truth shelters.  
What art Thou in Highest Heaven,  
Who created life around us,  
Who created Heaven above us,



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And the stars, *No-Zilimela* (The Pleiades)?  
We were blind until He taught us.  
(Thou mad'st us blind, it was Thy purpose.)  
With a trumpet gave the message,  
As He hunted for our spirits.  
Toiled to make our foes our brothers.  
(Thou our leader who dost guide us.)  
Then He cast His cloak about us,  
Cloak of Him whose hands are wounded,  
Cloak of Him whose feet are bleeding,  
See the blood that streameth for us;  
Flows it, though we have not asked it.  
Is it paid without our praying?  
Heaven our Home with no beseeching?\*

It is one of our mysteries that this illiterate man produced something in hymns that the highly educated of the twentieth century have not equalled, much less surpassed.

### CHIEF SECHELE I

It is fitting to praise the work of the pioneer missionaries in view of all they endured, but in doing so we sometimes overlook how much they owed to those who stood by their side often at risk to themselves from their fellow-tribesmen.

On what is known as 'The Hill' at Molepolole, in the heart of Bechuanaland, one comes on a large stone enclosure. It is deserted to-day except for four grave mounds in its centre. They are the resting-places of the Bakwena chiefs that have ruled since Livingstone's day. The first was Sechele I, David Livingstone's great friend. The two men early 'found' each other. Sechele too was a pioneer, who soon embraced the Christian faith. Indeed, so eager was he that, as Livingstone narrates, 'He set himself to read with such close application that, from

\*Translation by Professor D. J. Darlow.

being comparatively thin, the effect of being addicted to the chase, he became corpulent for want of exercise.' He learned the alphabet on the first day of Livingstone's residence in the vicinity, and later the missionary never entered the town but he was pressed to hear the Chief read some chapters of the Bible. Isaiah was a great favourite with him; and he was wont to exclaim, 'He was a fine man, that Isaiah; he knew how to speak.'

Chief Sechele had been a rain-doctor. He often assured Livingstone that he found it more difficult to give up this superstition than anything else which Christianity required him to abjure. Livingstone advised him that the only way to water the gardens was to select some never-failing river, make a canal, and irrigate the adjacent lands. And so, in pursuit of this new idea, the whole tribe moved to the Kolobeng, a stream about forty miles distant. Here the Bakwena built a school under Livingstone's superintendence, and here a Native smith taught Livingstone how to weld iron. At Kolobeng, too, the missionary built a house: it was in truth the only settled home Livingstone and his wife, Mary Moffat, ever had. The remains of these buildings, together with the little cemetery in which the Livingstones laid at least one child, make the spot one of the most sacred in Southern Africa.

Sechele was most anxious that his subjects should accept the Christian faith. But he was not sure that Livingstone's gentle methods would succeed. 'Do you imagine,' he roundly demanded one day of Livingstone, 'these people will ever believe by your merely talking to them? I can make them do nothing except by thrashing them; if you like, I shall call my headmen, and with our whips of rhinoceros-hide we will soon make them all believe together.' Before long, he was conducting family-

worship in his own house, in a simple and beautiful style, for he was a thorough master of his language. But when drought came, none of his people except his own family whom he ordered to attend, came near his meetings. 'In former times,' he said bitterly, 'when a chief was fond of hunting, all his people got dogs and became fond of hunting too. If he was fond of dancing or music, all showed liking to these amusements too. If the chief loved beer, they all rejoiced in strong drink. But in this case it is different. I love the Word of God, and not one of my brethren will join me.'

Despite all the hardships of the pioneer's way, the Chief was loyal to his new-found faith.

One looks to-day at the mound that covers the bones of Sechele I and one realises that not all primitive African chiefs were monsters of iniquity. One also feels something of the tears and triumph of mortal things.

Among those of a more modern time, but who have recently passed away, we mention two.

#### JOHN L. DUBE

John Langelibalele Dube was the son of a Zulu chief, who early in life renounced all claims to his father's chieftainship and decided upon a career that would open wider doors for the service of his people.

Educated at Amanzimtoti (now Adams) College, Natal, he later proceeded to Oberlin College in the United States. It was his intention to take a course in medicine, but he decided rather to train as a missionary and educationist.

While in America he was much influenced by Booker Washington, the founder of the great Tuskegee Institute.



Returning to South Africa he served for a time with the American Board Mission, but afterwards struck out on his own. Following the example of Booker Washington he founded Ohlange Institute, an educational establishment with industrial departments. He also founded and was the first editor of the weekly newspaper, *Ilanga Lase Natal*, which soon was one of the foremost means of expression for the Bantu mind.

In 1912 the African National Congress, a political body representing all tribes in Southern Africa, was launched and he was elected its first President.

For over thirty years he played the parts of Christian minister, educationist, journalist, author, politician. It was not all smooth going. Sometimes the way was rough indeed, not only from the side of the European authorities, who once at least cast him into prison, but there was also much opposition, disappointment and mud-slinging from his own people.

Through all he acted as one of the chief councillors of the Zulu Royal House, while at the same time he never lost the common touch. He knew the tribal people intimately. He did not stand aloof from them, but in their simple ways found inspiration and strength. Well educated, he could mediate between Black and White, and also between tribal and educated Africans. More than once he travelled overseas, to be the mouthpiece of his people to the British nation, and to interpret the African mind to the great missionary conference at Le Zoute in Belgium.

One of his last public services was as a member of the Natives Representative Council — sometimes known as the Native Parliament — which meets twice yearly in Pretoria or Cape Town. In that Council he stood for constructive, positive, moderate but determined policies for

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the advancement of the people whom he loved and served.

In 1936 the University of South Africa conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the first African in the Union to have an honorary doctorate conferred upon him.

He died in February, 1946, mourned by thousands of his own people and honoured by many of the White race.

### SOL. PLAATJE

Into the writer's study came one day an African, Sol. T. Plaatje. His object was to talk of a novel in English for which through eight years he had been seeking a publisher. Its title was *Mhudi, An Epic of South African Native Life a Hundred Years Ago*. The book was published in South Africa, as he requested, and so much merit did it possess that the *Times Literary Supplement* gave it a review of almost a column.

Plaatje was a remarkable man. He belonged to the Bechuana (Tswana) people. Of scanty education in youth, he had much natural force and a distinct bent for literary pursuits. In time he emerged as a leader of his people. A book which established his reputation was *Native Life in South Africa, Before and Since the European War and the Boer Rebellion*, which was published in 1916. Partly on its proceeds he travelled through the United States and Canada, lecturing on behalf of his people and explaining their political status.

Plaatje, however, will be remembered best for his literary work, in some of which he assumed the role of pioneer. He had a magnificent wealth of Tswana vocabulary which he used to good effect. A good source-book is his *Sechuana Proverbs with Literal Translations and their*

*European Equivalents.* This sets out as many as seven hundred and thirty-two proverbs. Most notable of all, however, is his work as a translator of Shakespeare into Tswana. His vernacular versions of *The Comedy of Errors* and *Julius Caesar* have both been published and have won high praise from those who are in a position to judge whether Shakespeare has been worthily translated into an African tongue. It is a far cry from Shakespeare in the sixteenth century to this child of the South African veld in the twentieth, but Plaatje, a man of no special academic training, bridged the gulf.

Of living examples of interesting and enterprising Africans we could cite a legion. We mention a few.

#### NER ABELINE MAZWAI

Near the village of Kentani, in the heart of the Transkeian Territories, one may enter a school of spinning and weaving. Its founder was Ner Abeline Mazwai. In early life he trained as a teacher, but went to seek his fortune in Cape Town. Here his ability to interpret was tested by Sir Walter Stanford, Secretary for Native Affairs and Chief Magistrate of the Transkei. As a result, young Mazwai was appointed as interpreter at Kentani in 1905. From the first he took a keen interest in the cultural and social progress of his people. He organised concerts and cricket; he urged the people to take to tobacco growing and to plant maize in rows. In 1912 he started an organization known as *Umjikelo*, to encourage education, to keep homes clean, and to explore and propagate methods of thrift. Soon he was writing articles in the Native weekly, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, on agricultural topics. These articles were read to a group of Native farmers in Kentani,



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who later banded themselves together as the Kentani Farmers' Association. Of this organization Mr. Mazwai became organizer and Secretary. Farmers' associations sprang up in other districts, so that there came to be formed the Transkeian Farmers' Union, of which he was made the Secretary. With the co-operation of Professor Jabavu he published a book, *Incwadi Yabalimi (The Farmers' Book)*, devoted to articles on agricultural affairs. A thousand copies were sold within a month. Its success led to the publication of a farmers' bi-monthly magazine, *Umcebisi Womlimi Nomfuyi*, which is to-day well known all over the Transkei. Mr. Mazwai has also advocated for years the running of co-operative credit societies as proclaimed by Father Bernard Huss.

In 1926 he opened a school of spinning and weaving. It was a private venture with no government backing. To this day it continues to flourish. Its great object is to encourage home industries. Its fees are low and its pupils come from all over the Transkei and beyond. It is likely to remain the most permanent memorial of an African who, eschewing the field of politics, concentrated on efforts of self-help among his people, with clear recognition that the past had wedded them into their land and stock, but the future must see hosts of them become familiar with the ways of industrial life.

## CHIEF SHADRACH ZIBI

This Chief, belonging to the Ciskei in Cape Province, in 1924 gave a notable lead to his people and to other chiefs. Born in 1879, he became in time a teacher, choir conductor and interpreter in the Lovedale Missionary Institution. In these capacities he distinguished himself and left his impress

on large numbers of chiefs, ministers and leaders who were pupils in his classes. After fourteen years' service, he returned home to assume the duties of the chieftainship.

One of his first enterprises in his new office was to throw himself, in the war of 1914—1918, into a scheme for Native labour in connection with the Defence Force and the campaign in German South-West Africa. The type of men desired were those who could re-lay and repair the railways, and who could act as transport drivers and undertake similar employment. He personally recruited sixty men from among his own people and proceeded with them to Upington.

After the war he recognised that one of the greatest needs of his people was for land. He found that the land held by many was so poor and limited that, even with the best will and effort, no secure living could be wrung from it, while many of his men possessed no land whatever. So in 1924 he took the bold step of trekking with his people from Middeldrift in Cape Province to the district of Rustenburg in the Transvaal, where he established the first Native settlement. The venture has been an unqualified success.

Chief Zibi is an able speaker and writer. Engaging in journalism he writes for leading European and African newspapers. His success as a chief has been as great as his success as a teacher, and he has won the respect of large numbers of all races.

#### SISTER DORA

One of the best-known figures in Port Elizabeth, to Africans but also to Europeans, is Sister Dora Nginza (*née* Jacobs), of the New Brighton Health Clinic. Trained

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for the nursing profession at Lovedale she began work in Port Elizabeth in 1919, and has since had a continuous record of service under government and municipality. The efficiency she has shown in her service and her devotion to duty are beyond praise. She has been the friend and helper of countless numbers of Africans. Yet when asked recently to give some account of her service she declined to do so, saying that to write or speak of herself was one of the last things she could do. The remark is typical of one of the most outstanding members in South Africa of a self-effacing profession.

### PROFESSOR D. D. T. JABAVU

For many years the best-known African in the Union was Professor D. D. T. Jabavu, and to-day he still holds a foremost place. His father was J. Tengo Jabavu, the founder and editor of the first weekly Native newspaper, *Imvo Zabantsundu*. The older Jabavu was the friend of the late Sir James Rose-Innes and other prominent Europeans; he was urged to stand for the Cape Parliament and might well have been elected, but declined to do so lest it should cause antagonism to his people. The younger Jabavu, after his early education in South Africa, proceeded to London University and took the degree of B.A., the first South African Native to take an English degree. At Birmingham University he studied further and gained the education diploma. Returning to South Africa, he was appointed to the staff of the newly founded South African Native College at Fort Hare. From 1916 till 1944 he was lecturer and professor at the College, teaching in early days Latin and the four Bantu languages, Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho and Tswana. Amid all his academic interests,

Professor Jabavu has maintained the closest contacts with his own people and not least with the humbler members of his race. He founded and organised the South African Farmers' Association, and spent much time and effort in seeking to improve his people's agricultural methods and to encourage farming co-operatives among them. For many years he was President of the Cape African Teachers' Association and also of the South African Federation of Native Teachers. Active also in politics, he was chairman of numerous conventions and conferences, as well as lecturer to both Europeans and Africans all over Southern Africa. He has contributed evidence before many government and other commissions. Professor Jabavu has travelled extensively in Europe and America, and has related his experiences for the benefit of his less favoured brethren in Xhosa books which have had a wide sale. Not only has he been the author of various volumes in the vernacular, but also in English, the best-known of the latter being *The Black Problem* and *The Segregation Fallacy*. Through all he has remained the same cheerful, friendly man, rich in human qualities, and loving nothing better than to be with his fellows or following his musical pursuits with piano or violin. The contribution he has made to South African life has made his place of distinction to be richly deserved.

DR. B. W. VILAKAZI

At the Graduation Ceremony of the Witwatersrand University in March 1946, the first degree conferred was that of Doctor of Literature on a member of the Bantu race. Dr. B. W. Vilakazi has long been noted for his



contributions to Zulu literature. For many years he has been assistant to Professor C. M. Doke in the Bantu Studies Department of that University. His intellectual quality — and incidentally that of other Africans — may be gauged by a poem he wrote in Zulu, *Impophoma Ye Victoria (Victoria Falls)*. The poem has been translated into English by Dr. J. Dexter Taylor, who has followed the original poem line by line, used the same metre, and has not introduced an idea or an observation that is not in the original. We cite it as our last example of the work of an African of repute.

Flow on, flow on forever, O ye waters,  
 O wildly tossing cataract of terror  
 And of beauty. Yea, brook no interruption.  
 Flow on in depth unsounded and unmeasured.  
 'Tis God who hath with grace thy brow anointed,  
 And crowned thy head with circlet of the rainbow,  
 And with eternal mists thy feet enshrouded.  
 He giveth thee the voice of mighty thunders,  
 And audience gives in solitary grandeur,  
 There where thou silenceth the mouths of mortals  
 Upon the mighty cliffs of Isibungu.

Who then shall dare arrive in mood audacious  
 With pipings shrill of grasshopper and cricket,  
 From out the dust the milliped inhabits  
 To vie with thee, Dumase, Smoke that Thunders?  
 By what emotions stirred or what desire  
 With feeble words and voice to fret the air?  
 The Sea itself, outranked, plays second fiddle  
 Like second string of maidens in the dancing,  
 Nor ranks with thine her voice of many waters.  
 At times she sleeps, her waves but gently lapping;  
 Is like a man fatigued, o'ercome and languid,  
 With heat of sun borne down and heavy labour.

## AFRICAN CONTRASTS

So doth the Sea, with her own tossings weary,  
Her boist'rous billows hush to soothéd silence,  
Enfolding them like sheep without a shepherd.  
To-day they dance with restlessness increasing;  
To-morrow lies the Sea in glossy stillness,  
And drains the very azure of the heavens.  
But thou, of mood and temper never changing,  
Nor waxing old with all thy ceaseless flowing,  
Pour'st ever down thy torrents, O Victoria,  
No single day thy ceaseless flow abating,  
By day and night its volume never wanting,  
Example thou of diligence surpassing!

How often has the morning star, *Ikwezi*,  
Since first it op'ed its eyes above in heaven,  
Heard you bemoaning like the night hyena;  
And all the stars of heaven's dome expansive —  
The while they wait in glittering glory shining  
The angel's word, at which with mighty shouting  
The earth shall melt with fervent heat consuméd,  
And open all its frame to God Almighty,  
Whose eyes like keenest blade of assegai are piercing —  
Give ear to thee, and to thy voice they listen.  
To thee they seem to say, Go on forever;  
To thee who ever bid'st farewell but ne'er departest.

Each branch whose leafy burden waveth o'er you  
Leaning its head above your pools abundant,  
Draws all the verdant current in its veinlets,  
Its coursing blood, from out the bubbling fountains,  
Where wave the rushes and the vines' long tendrils  
Moved gently by the stirring of the north wind.  
Behold, the birds courageous flying o'er thee  
Skim boldly down, and blithely bathe their feathers  
Within the dripping moisture of the mist veil,  
Which thou, Dumase, ever breathest upward,  
No fear have they of all thy sound tumultuous.

## SOME GREAT AFRICANS

A joy it is to touch with fervent finger  
The fringe upon the borders of the loin dress,  
Which girds the loins of beautiful Victoria.  
The strings of falling rain which make her girdle  
Run races down and crash upon the boulders,  
And spurts of foam burst forth in fairy circlets,  
And water-smoke flows upward like to fire.  
It hides the stately pillars of the rapids  
And shows the gleaming colours of the rainbow.  
The Sun's tiara proudly worn at noonday.  
The night a milky way it spreads of whiteness,  
And sprinkles it with tiny twinkling starlets.

For me, who have no voice like thine resounding,  
Forever pouring forth its wealth of music,  
'Tis like the silly babbling of the foolish,  
If I essay, in syllables impotent,  
With this, my pen, which drips but feeble fluid  
To tell thy wealth of majesty and beauty,  
And seek to stir the hearts of those less happy  
Whose eyes have never feasted on thy glory.  
Thou retest those by darkness overtaken,  
Who wander restless seeking for a refuge,  
And have no place their weary heads to pillow,  
Who in their stumblings hear thy voice inviting.

Their faces light with smiles of simple pleasure.  
They sit them down and slowly fill the hemp pipe,  
And take their snuff, the while they gaze upon thee.  
They sate their eyes and sate their hearts with gazing  
Till soothing sleep comes down and drowns thy tumult.  
Thy sound is like the honey of the bee-hives;  
Like hand of tender nurse upon the forehead,  
With fingers spread, now smoothing and now ruffling  
The hair; and sweet sleep gently wooing.  
And wand'ers find a refuge from their journeys  
Beneath the magic wings of thy white waters,  
Which break from off thy cataract in spray-mist.  
So let them fall, their message ever telling  
To all of Africa's coming generations.

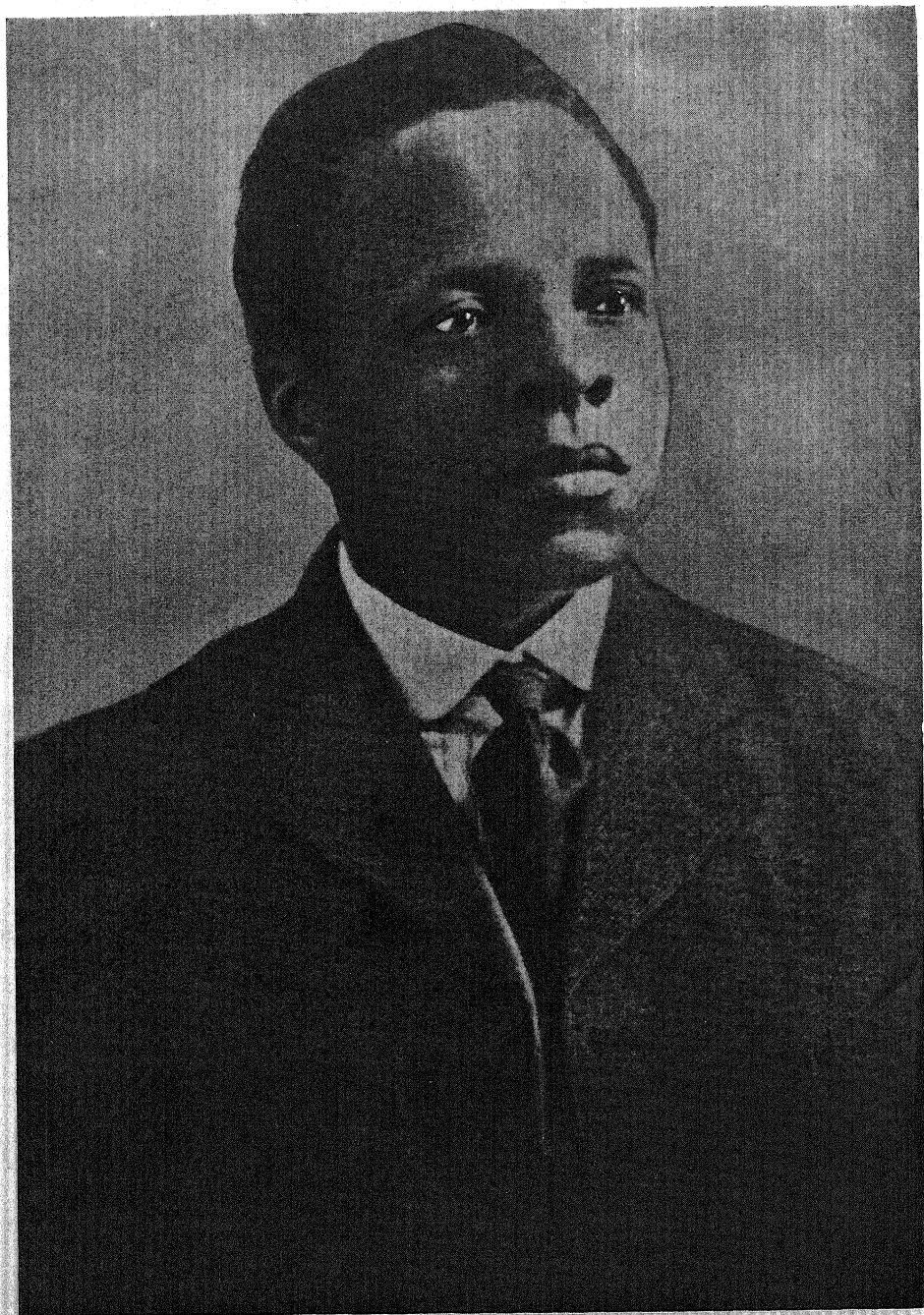


Some distinguished Africans. Sechele and his wife.  
He was chief of the Bakwena tribe and a friend of Dr. Livingstone.





Moshesh, who founded the Basuto nation.



Sol. T. Plaatje, who translated some of Shakespeare's plays into Tswana.





Rev. Dr. Walter Rubusana, Ph.D., who translated the Bible into Xhosa.



Pte. George Kalamore, awarded the Military Medal for great bravery.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE INFLUENCE OF HISTORY

FROM THE careers of some representative Africans, who have taken or are taking of the raw material of South African life in order to mould it into an historic pattern, we turn to see how events in our country's history have moulded some of us adversely to-day. It is a commonplace that historical events have a definite though often subtle and unconscious influence on the lives of following generations. Unless the true nature of happenings is discerned and their importance is seen in true perspective, types of action born of their influence may live on long after the motive which gave rise to the action has ceased to exist. Too many of us European South Africans act as though we had been poured into the mould of yesterday. The historical figures of the past, both White and Black, who were prominent in certain dramas, have passed away. The circumstances which created the mould in which their lives were cast no longer prevail. To some extent the mould itself has disappeared. Yet the pattern of action remains to influence the lives of to-morrow's children, so that men see again how true it is to say that the future does not meet us in front but streams up from behind and over our heads. In no realm is this more clearly seen than in that of race relations. In no sphere are influences from the past more persistent.

What large space, for example, our history books give to the 'Kaffir wars'! When the Bantu were coming down from the north and the Whites were spreading eastwards

#### AFRICAN CONTRASTS

from the Cape, it was inevitable that they should clash in the border country. The Bantu were a pastoral people with a passion for herds and flocks and an urge for large pastures on which to spread themselves. To them nothing seemed more natural than that they should make their way further south and west and that those who stood in their path, be they Bushmen or Hottentots or Europeans, should be regarded as foes, to be harried out of the way. On the other hand, to Europeans whose empires called them to sail the seven seas and to straddle continents, it seemed absurd that a few hundred miles of expansion in Southern Africa should be denied them, or even disputed by aborigines. Thus the scene was set, not merely for physical conflicts but for mental antagonism. Even on the wide veld there seemed no room for both.

But that day has passed. In reasonable circles it is now accepted as axiomatic that White and Black must both have South Africa as a common home. Few ideas seem wilder than the notion that the Blacks might be removed or go away, leaving the Union as a purely White man's country. It is seen that ultimately the interests of both races merge into one. War and peace have equally taught that they stand or fall together. Yet too often the pattern of action is not that of co-operation which to-day's set-up demands, but is something reminiscent of the antagonism that marked the earliest contacts. We keep the memory of the 'Kaffir wars' green, and so are guilty of a retarding anachronism.

A modern South African statesman — J. H. Hofmeyr — has said, 'It is well that it should be pointed out that it is the missionaries who above all others have made South Africa safe for European civilization. It is not only the Black man, it is also the White man, who

should thank God for the missionaries.' Yet the attitude of numbers in South Africa towards missionaries is unconsciously moulded to-day by an attitude common towards one missionary and a few of his colleagues a century ago. Dr. John Philip wielded his extraordinary influence with Downing Street in the early half of last century, and so shaped South African State policy. His famous *Researches in South Africa* was published in 1828. So influential was the book and so revolutionary in its effects that its author came to be detested by multitudes. To them he was the sinister figure who chiefly caused the Great Trek.

It all seems of the remote past, as undoubtedly it is. The day of the Statute of Westminster is with us. Downing Street now has no overruling say in South African affairs of State. But Dr. Philip and, with him, many missionaries remain figures of suspicion to the public. They are accounted alien meddlers with South African affairs, ready to sacrifice the land's truest interests to those of another country or to the black people among whom they work. The greatness of John Philip goes unrecognised, even when a modern historian declares that Philip has no need to be whitewashed, but only to have the mud flung at him wiped off! And it is forgotten or unknown that countless missionaries have made South Africa their only home, for which they suffered and served, and in whose soil their bones were laid at last, while their children have devoted themselves to its weal. Despite all the changes that time has wrought, the mould of yesterday remains and from it comes the pattern of action used to-day.

In similar case is the attitude of many who seem unable to forget that some of the early missionaries married aboriginal wives. Van der Kemp's marriage to a slave



girl and Read's union with a Hottentot are remembered almost as if they were normal missionary deeds, though they were the rarest of occurrences and are found only in a very early time. It is not in missionary circles that miscegenation has found encouragement. Among missionaries as well as among their converts, some of whom have studied in Europe, there has been so much pride of race as to cause revulsion from mixture of blood. The same is not true of some other classes, as crowded cities and some lonely trading stations have revealed, but the pattern of antipathy to missionaries that was set by the dislike of Van der Kemp's deed continues to influence race relations down to our time.

No religious festival in South Africa is more widely celebrated than Dingaan's Day. It recalls how Piet Retief, the Voortrekker leader, descended into Natal, and applied to Dingaan for a grant of territory, which was promised on condition that the Boers should recover for him some stolen cattle. This service rendered, Retief, with one hundred men, returned to the king's kraal with the spoil. A document granting territory was drawn up, and a feast followed. At the close of the festivities the Boers were suddenly attacked and killed to a man. Then a large force of Zulu warriors proceeded across the Tugela, purposing to slay every White man, woman and child to be found in Natal. Many of the Boers were taken by surprise as they dwelt in small parties, and it is estimated that some six hundred were massacred. More fighting followed. At last four hundred and sixty mounted Boers, led by Andries Pretorius, advanced on Dingaan's kraal, and on Sunday, 16th December 1838, encountered a Zulu army of 12,000 men on the banks of Blood River. A hotly contested battle resulted in the total defeat of the Zulus,

who left 3,000 dead on the field. This memorable action is annually celebrated as a public holiday and day of thanksgiving — Dingaan's Day. The true significance of the day was that it marked the triumph of the forces of progress over barbarism. This is what thousands of South Africans give thanks for. They remember that the Voortrekkers vowed they would observe such a day of thanksgiving to God if victory were granted them. But to others in our time it is not a day of religious memory at all, but one of rejoicing at the victory of Europeans over the Natives. Irresponsibles ill-treat Africans on the streets and in public places, so that Dingaan's Day becomes coloured with revenge by Europeans for what the Zulu chief did to their men. Thus through a lack of true knowledge and perspective an historical happening of long ago is used to make mischief between the races in our time.

Perhaps most marked of all is the persistence of the attitude of aloofness and segregation born of the earliest times when educated African men and women were unknown. It was natural then that the White man should feel that between him and the Bantu there was a great gulf fixed. It was understandable at least that the slogan should be adopted, 'No equality between White and Black in either Church or State.' But the passing of the years has seen an educated class arise among Africans. The attitude of mind that classes all Africans to-day as unlettered, untutored and unrefined is divorced from reality. Few things indeed make for more mischief than an outlook of this kind or too rigid an adherence to the segregation practice, so that loss of understanding between the races results. There was a time when at Lovedale White and Black, though separate in dormitories and at

dining-tables, met and mingled in class-rooms and in sports. Some of the best administrators South Africa has known participated in this system. Men like Sir Richard Solomon (High Commissioner in London), Sir William Solomon (Chief Justice of the Union), Sir Walter E. M. Stanford (Secretary for Native Affairs), Senator the Hon. Arthur Fuller (Minister of Agriculture), the Hon. Jules Ellenberger (Resident Commissioner, Bechuana-land), the Hon. Saul Solomon (Judge), Senator the Hon. W. T. Welsh (Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories), Dr. W. G. Bennie (Chief Inspector of Native Education), Mr. Percival Ross Frames (Chairman, De Beers Mines, Kimberley) and Mr. Irvine Grimmer (Secretary and General Manager, De Beers Mines) are a few of those who were given a portion of their education under such circumstances and many of them have declared that they received lasting benefit from this close contact with members of the African race. Understanding and esteem grew on both sides as the fruit of this recognition that times were changing and the Black race advancing. It may be averred that it is not for the good of South Africa to-day that so many Europeans have no knowledge of the capabilities and outlook of the educated Bantu and that they flounder and are ill-at-ease when brought into close contact with them.

Few things are more needed in our land than the recognition that as men progress old ideas require to be looked at anew, and historical concepts that have outlived their usefulness cast overboard.

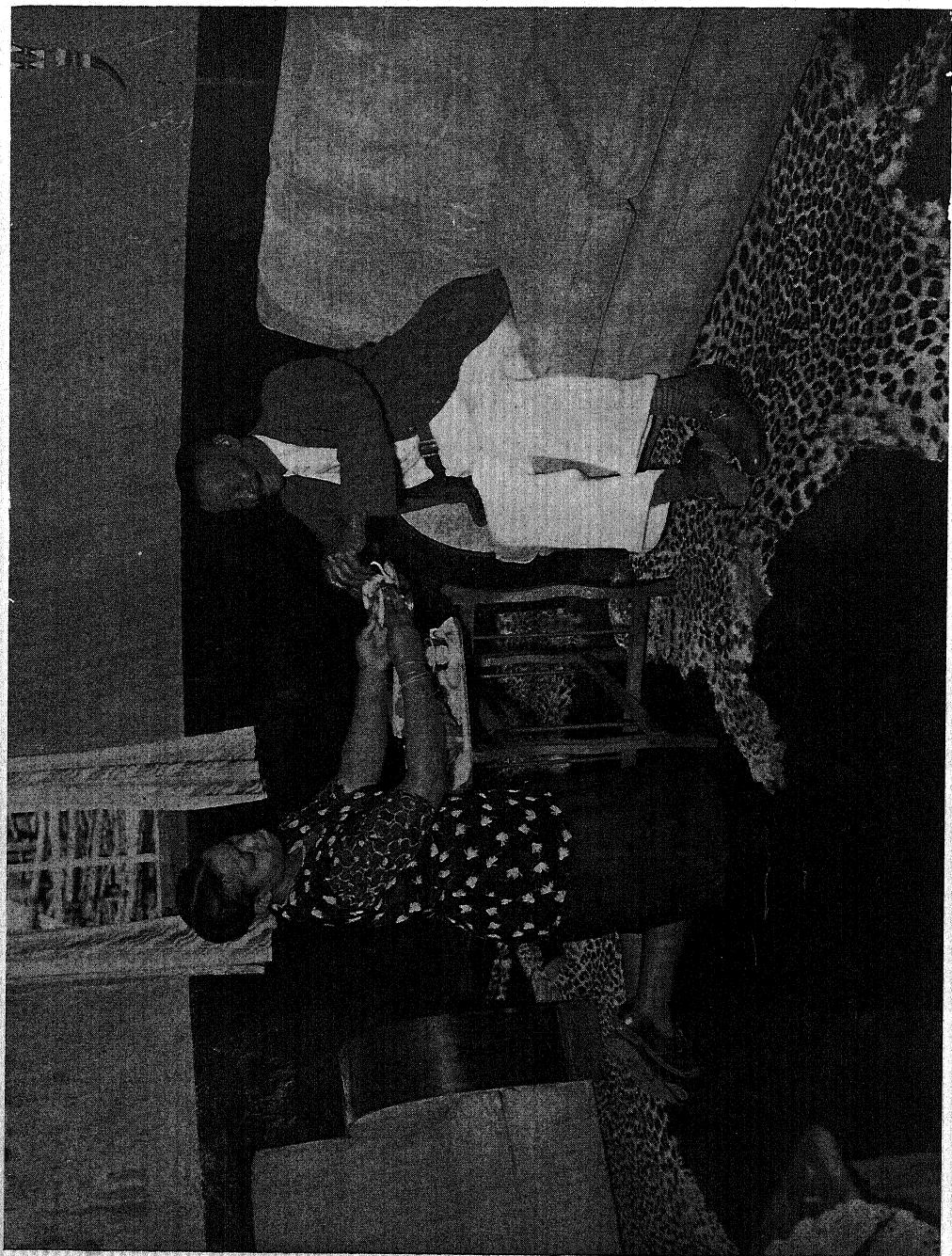
To us in a democratic age it makes strange reading to learn from Trevelyan's *History of England* that Pitt's Attorney-General, John Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon, demanded in 1794 the condemnation of the radical shoe-



maker, Thomas Hardy, for high treason, on the ground that he had advocated 'representative government, the direct opposite of the government which is established here', or to discover from the same source that, shortly before the passing of the Reform Bill in England, the Duke of Wellington was resisting electoral change, arguing that 'the system of representation possesses the full and entire confidence of the country' and that to improve it was beyond the range of human wisdom.

It seems likely that a century after this some of the conservative notions that sway South African politics will appear strangely reactionary and antique.

It is the business of large-minded men and women to foresee the future judgments of history — and to hasten their advent.



In his modern home and in traditional manner — on her knees with hands outstretched — the ex-Regent of Zululand receives a cup of tea from a member of his household.



Working raw-hide skins as they were prepared in the days when  
van Riebeeck landed at the Cape.



## CHAPTER XV

### NATIVE ADMINISTRATION

**B**EFORE the beginning of this century we had in South Africa two Colonies and two Republics, each with a parliament or its equivalent and each largely pursuing its own way. It was an extraordinary situation, particularly in that the members of four supreme legislative bodies were all drawn from not much more than a million White people. It was inevitable that, when union came in 1910, an administration built on the policies of four more or less independent states should reveal considerable stresses and strains. It was all the more inevitable for two other reasons. First, those who sat in the first Union Parliament were representatives of provinces with little experience of inter-state co-operation either in peace or in war, and, except in the case of Cape Colony, inexperienced in parliamentary life. Second, the first Botha cabinet consisted of four ministers from the Cape, three from the Transvaal, two from the Free State and two from Natal. These made a desperate attempt to harmonize all and yet have regard to provincial susceptibilities. Such an administration was the logical — or illogical — outcome of the historic past, coupled with a desire to leave undisturbed local usages.

In no sphere were divergent attitudes more quickly or clearly revealed than in those of race relations. The attitude towards the African people differed in Cape Colony from that pursued in the Free State, the Transvaal and Natal. In the Cape the policy had been considerably shaped by British liberalism, and Rhodes' dictum of 'equal



rights for every civilised man' was not without influence. In the Transvaal and Free State memories of the Great Trek and later conflicts tended to harden in a policy roughly summed up in the Grondwet declaration, 'No equality between White and Black in either Church or State.' In Natal the policy in theory tended toward British liberal views, but actual practice was far from being consistent with these.

Perhaps the most outstanding instance of divergence was in regard to the political rights of Africans and other Non-Europeans. In 1853, when representative government was given to the Cape, there came with it the franchise to such of the Bantu people as could meet the educational and property requirements. In Natal it was theoretically possible for an African to possess the franchise, but the numbers who were allowed to do so were negligible. In the Orange Free State and the Transvaal no franchise rights were given to Natives.

The Cape Native policy had been found to work so well that when, in 1908, the National Convention met at Durban with a view to union of the four colonies, the leaders of both the Cape political parties pressed for the extension of the Cape Native franchise to the whole union. 'The Cape,' said a Government representative (Mr. J. W. Sauer) 'had proved the success of its principle and had the right to ask for the adoption of its policy by South Africa.' An opposition leader (Sir Thomas Smartt) declared, 'If they adopted a higher test than existed in the Cape, together with a qualification for civilisation to be approved by an impartial board, and equal rights for all, they would have offered the country a permanent solution for its problem.' The delegates from the other three colonies did not accept these contentions, and when

the Cape delegates found themselves outvoted they sought to protect their policy in the Cape Colony itself by making a three-fourths majority of members of the Houses of the Union Parliament, sitting together, necessary before any change could be made detrimental to the Cape voters. In the end they had to accept a two-thirds majority. When the decision was made public, a protest was immediately published by the Afrikaner Bond, the one all-Dutch political organisation in the Cape Colony, insisting that the Cape Native franchise had not been adequately protected. But, even when the majority of the delegates went further and had it laid down in the Constitution that members of parliament must be of European descent, most people in Cape Colony had little anxiety, believing that a political right which had been held for over fifty years and had not been abused could not be taken away. They believed also that the Cape policy would in time spread northwards.

The Botha-Smuts Government, which held office for fourteen years after Union, left the Cape Native franchise undisturbed. The Hertzog Government, which followed, commenced in 1926 an attack upon the franchise, but it was not until 1936, under a Coalition Government, that the two-thirds majority was obtained and the Cape Native franchise was abolished. The voting in the final division was actually 169 to 11. The defenders of the Cape Native franchise had, however, succeeded in getting the Native voters' names transferred to a separate roll. Three Native constituencies were created — the Transkei, the Ciskei, and the remainder of the Cape — and the voters on the separate register were given the right of electing three members of European descent to the House of Assembly. Thus divergency of political status remains among Natives in the four provinces until

the present day. The African people elect four senators, one to represent the Province of Natal, one the Transvaal and Orange Free State combined, one the Transkeian Territories and one the rest of the Cape Province, but only Natives in the Cape Province have power to elect members to the House of Assembly. The Cape Natives were also given the right to elect two members to the Cape Provincial Council, while Natives in the other provinces have no such rights.

It may be remarked that the loss of the common electoral franchise in the Cape, along with other tokens that the policies of the northern provinces are prevailing under Union, explains much of the political unrest among Africans in the Union to-day. Their point of view has been exactly expressed by an Afrikaner historian. In his volume, *The Cape Coloured People*, Dr. J. S. Marais declares:

If the last hundred years of South African history have any 'lesson' to teach, it is this: every inch of territory yielded to the supporters of caste is ground irretrievably lost. One of the great errors of the Cape politicians, who at the National Convention of 1908-9 compromised with the men from the north on the principle of a colour-blind constitution, was their belief that the essential reasonableness of the Cape's institutions and laws would sooner or later cause them to prevail throughout South Africa. It was a belief that left entirely out of account the immense power of racial prejudice over men's minds.

Further divergence of practice in different parts of the Union is seen in the application of the pass laws. Prior to union, there were pass laws in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal. In Cape Colony there were no pass laws, except that no Native could enter or leave the Transkei without being in possession of a pass.

It is worth recalling that the pass system, both in its historical origin and in its spirit, is closely connected with slavery. Slavery in the Colonies and the pass system in England were in full operation from the sixteenth century till early in the nineteenth. The English pass system was applied to 'the poor'. A 'pauper' could not leave his parish of origin without a pass from the parish authorities, and if he were found travelling without his pass he was arrested, punished and sent back home. The pass system was abolished in England in 1822. Slavery in the Colonies was abolished in 1833. Unfortunately, in the meantime the pass system had been introduced into the Cape by Governor Macartney in 1797 and applied to the Hottentots by Governor Caledon's Code in 1809. It was applied to the Bantu entering the Colony early in the nineteenth century. As, however, Cape Colony came under British liberal influence the pass system was less in evidence.

Generally the pass, in the northern provinces, is given by a government official or by an employer, and the paper certifies that the bearer has permission to go from one place to another. If a man is unable to produce the required pass when asked to do so by a police official, arrest follows and he may be sent to prison or fined. His failure is not treated as a civil or administrative offence but as a criminal one.

Originally the pass laws were designed to control the movements of Africans and to protect farmers against vagrants who might be stock stealers or other workers of mischief. Every male Bantu could be asked at any time to produce his pass, and so the authorities were better able to prevent unauthorised wandering. An extension of the pass system was made when the Bantu began to flock to towns. It was then used as a method of checking



## NATIVE ADMINISTRATION

desertion, identifying Bantu who had become lost, and tracing the relatives of men who had died. The system has become even more irksome because of the multiplicity of other papers often now demanded. An African is compelled to carry under some circumstances one or more of as many as eight papers. They are:

1. A travelling pass is required throughout the Transvaal and the Free State by every African who wants to leave the Province or who wants to go from the countryside to the town.
2. A permit to look for work has to be obtained on entering the town and is valid for six days only, though it may be renewed.
3. A labourer's pass must be obtained for temporary absence from mines or factories.
4. A farm labourer's document of identification must be shown by an African who has left one farm and seeks work on another.
5. A permit to enter a location is necessary.
6. A permit to house a lodger, and sometimes for other purposes, must be sought.
7. A tax receipt to show that the bearer has paid his poll-tax for the current year must always be on hand.
8. A night pass in a municipal area is essential if an African wishes to be out after 9 p.m.

The Bantu bitterly resent the application of the pass laws and the hindrance they place on freedom of movement in their own land, especially when such laws are enforced only against themselves and no other section of the population. They point to the fact that in the Cape Province, where there are no pass laws as distinct from

certain of the above-mentioned permits, crime is no more prevalent than in other provinces; indeed, there are fewer convictions for desertion under the Masters' and Servants' Acts in the Cape than in the Transvaal. We have already noted that Colonel Deneys Reitz, basing his statements on the declarations of the Smit Government Commission, revealed that in the years 1939-41 no fewer than 348,907 arrests were made in the three northern provinces for contravention of the pass laws. In 1944 Africans convicted of infringements of the pass laws numbered 73,560. Africans maintain that this method of maintaining law and order is futile and expensive; they say that magistrates, police and other officials could be much better employed. They also contend that treating failure to produce a pass as a criminal offence leads to making criminals of law-abiding people.

Various governmental commissions have reported against the pass laws. In 1920 the Inter-Departmental Committee on Native Pass Laws stated:

The great weight of evidence from and on behalf of employers of labour and from officials shows that the various pass systems operating more particularly in the rural areas have been of little practical value . . . the trend of such evidence was towards the removal of restrictions in regard to the personal liberty of Natives and their replacement by a universal system of identification with efficient machinery for recording and tracing Natives away from their homes.

This Committee recommended that all existing pass laws be repealed and that outside the Cape Province 'each Native be furnished with a lifelong document to be called a "registration certificate", to be on parchment and to be provided by the Government free of cost.'

The Native Economic Commission of 1930-2 asked that the report of that Committee be acted on, and several

members went so far as to declare that the system had outlived its usefulness and could now be abolished.

In 1940 the Mould Young Report made similar recommendations for the repeal of all laws dealing with passes and their unification into a single document to be known as a 'Certificate of Identification' to be carried by all male Africans.

In 1942 the Smit Report made public the appalling figures given by Deney's Reitz of pass-law convictions. The Report said:

These statistics indicate the tremendous price which the country is paying in respect of these laws, for, apart from the actual cost of administration, there is the vast loss of labour due to detention during arrest and imprisonment. Fines paid constitute a drain on the Native's income which he can ill afford. Apart from these considerations the harassing and constant interference with the freedom of movement of Natives gives rise to a burning sense of grievance and injustice which has an unsettling effect on the Native population as a whole.

The pass laws in the three northern provinces remain. The fact that our administration is built on the Native policies of two colonies and two republics has so far prevented the adoption of a uniform system for the whole Union.

There are other differences in administration between province and province. Natal, for example, requires the registration of all marriages by Native custom. This is not required elsewhere. In Natal, too, herbalists and other Native 'doctors' can obtain recognition and permission to practise by payment of a tax. Mainly in Natal and the Transvaal the right has been given to hold chiefs' courts. They hear only petty cases arising out of Native custom observed in their tribes.

In the Transkeian Territories the Native Council system has been developed, so that we find the United Transkeian Territories General Council a body of considerable influence and powers, with the right to impose taxes and expend large sums. In no other province is there a body of equal status.

The systems of Native education differ in the different provinces, so that we find teachers in one province enjoying privileges and rights which those in other provinces do not possess. Variations in educational practice may, however, be less marked in future, since there has recently been appointed a National Advisory Board for Native Education representative of the whole Union.

Variations have arisen also in different parts in regard to the application of European and Native law. The teasing problem early presented itself, — If the Bantu are British subjects should they not be amenable to English or Roman-Dutch law? But the Bantu had their own well-established legal codes, which admirably suited their mode of life. Under Sir Theophilus Shepstone racial differentiation distinguished Natal Native policy from that of the Cape. The Bantu were made subject to Native law, in so far as it was not repugnant to the dictates of humanity, law administered by their own chiefs, assisted by European 'Native Magistrates', with an appeal to the Great Chief, the Lieutenant-Governor and his Executive Council. In time, the practice became recognised in the Cape of applying Native law in the Transkei and European law in the rest of the Colony, thus having divergence even within the bounds of one Colony itself.

Under present-day conditions there is a large measure of racial differentiation. Thus, though the Bantu, especially when they have become detribalized and live in an urban



setting, are brought under the ordinary laws of the Union, even to them it is sometimes much fairer to apply 'Native law'; and this is more marked in the case of dwellers in the Reserves. A typical instance is found in matters affecting family relationships, as in disputes about the payment of *lobolo* or bride-price. These are peculiar to Bantu modes of living. It was primarily because of such considerations, and also because it would be more convenient for all parties to hear separately cases in which only Natives were involved, that a special system of courts for them was set up. These are known as Native Commissioners' Courts. In them appeals from chiefs' courts, but also the most of civil cases between Natives, are heard.

There are also Native Appeal Courts, one for the Transvaal and Natal and the other for the Cape Province and the Orange Free State. In them the cases are tried by three experienced Native Commissioners, one of whom is the permanent President of the court. These courts decide cases according to European law or according to Native law and custom, whichever seems best to meet the case.

Such provisions have not, however, eliminated all difficulties. The differences in different provinces again obtrude themselves. Not all Native law has been recorded and even less of it has been codified. In Natal a code of Native law was drawn up in 1891 and submitted to revision in 1932. Thus Zulu law is more clearly known than any other branch of Native law. In other provinces there is much more obscurity.

As can well be imagined, the recognition of Native law alongside European law has frequently led to conflict between them, and the legal problems of the double system have not been easy to resolve.

As if the situation were not complex enough already, the Bantu themselves have complicated matters by their love of litigation, although frequently they are in no position to afford the costs, but even more by their preference for magistrates' courts, where attorneys may be employed, rather than for Native Commissioners' courts. Yet in the latter, since Bantu litigants are expected to conduct their own cases, the procedure is designedly simpler and the process less expensive. Their preference for magistrates' courts is partly due to the fact that many of the present-day Bantu are not well versed in Native law, but also because the complexity of modern cases makes it often desirable, if not necessary, to employ an attorney whose training enables him to unravel the tangled skein and present the facts with clarity to the court.

Does this chapter seem a jumble? If so, it is a true reflection of the actual situation. Because our administration has been built on the Native policies of two colonies and two republics; because we still maintain differences of method in different provinces; because we endeavour to apply now European law and now Native law, and often set up conflicts between them; because we treat some offences as administrative<sup>a</sup> when committed by Europeans and as criminal when committed by Africans; because of these and other things the African is nonplussed. Evidently it is not enough that the West should crash on him with heavy impact: it must hit at him from different quarters and with different kinds of hammers.

## CHAPTER XVI

### HOW WE RULE THE AFRICANS

**A**MONG Europeans the idea is common that a Native chief has, and always had, autocratic powers. This is a fallacy, for almost invariably a chief is a constitutional ruler whose decisions are the decisions of his councillors and himself, taken after much mutual deliberation. The point has importance and is of more than academic interest, because in the Union's rule of Africans the Governor-General occupies the place, and is given the title, of 'Supreme Chief', with more power than was accorded a Paramount Chief under Native custom.

In the Cape before Union the tendency of the Native Affairs Department was to break down the power of the chiefs. Even some missionaries supported this, contending that as peace came to Scotland when the Highland Chiefs were shorn of their power and deprived of their private armies, so would peace be more sure in South Africa when the leaders of the tribes, many of them ignorant and reactionary men, had less influence. The Native Affairs Departments of the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal sought, however, to make large use of the chiefs and headmen in their administration.

The crediting of the Supreme Chief, under modern conditions, with great authority is partly due to its being convenient to have autocratic power in the hands of the Native Affairs Department. When the Union was formed in 1910, the powers previously held by the President or Governor were delegated to the Governor-General, though,

of course, it was recognised that the Governor-General would act in accordance with the advice of his ministers, as is the practice under constitutional government. The one in intimate touch with the Native people is the Minister of Native Affairs, who is responsible to Parliament and who countersigns the proclamation issued by the Governor-General in his capacity as Supreme Chief.

To assist the Minister of Native Affairs there are permanent officials of high status. They are: The Secretary for Native Affairs, the Under-Secretary, five Chief Native Commissioners, the Director of Native Labour on the Witwatersrand, and the Director of Native Agriculture. In the Reserves are a corps of Native Commissioners. Magistrates act as Native Commissioners outside the Reserves.

There is also the Native Affairs Commission, a permanent body of five members which was appointed first by General Smuts in 1920, and which, at the commencement of its work, laid down the following as its 'guiding principles':

- (a) The Native Affairs Commission is primarily and essentially the friend of the Native people and as such the needs, aspirations and progress of the Natives should be considered sympathetically by it;
- (b) The Commission is the adviser of the Government where the interests of the Natives are concerned;
- (c) The Commission should endeavour to educate public opinion, both Native and non-Native, so as to bring about the most harmonious relations between the White and Black in South Africa.



The Commission considers all proposed legislation affecting the Bantu, conducts special investigations, and by mixing with the Native people in all parts of the country keeps itself abreast of Native circumstances and views. The Commission reports annually to the Governor-General, and where the Commission does not approve of any proposal put forward by the Minister of Native Affairs, it is at liberty to make its views known in Parliament.

Unfortunately, under General Hertzog, the membership of the Commission came to be recruited almost without exception from politicians belonging to the party in office, some of them with no special qualifications for the task. And as time passed it more and more assumed the role of explaining to the Bantu pre-determined government policy rather than the interpretation of African needs and aspirations to the Government. In more recent days, these tendencies have been somewhat corrected.

The Bantu people often contend that there is now much less need for the existence of the Native Affairs Commission, because, for the expression of Native opinion, there has been set up the Natives' Representative Council. This is a body of twenty-two members, of which the Secretary for Native Affairs is chairman. The five Chief Native Commissioners are members *ex officio*, and four African members are appointed by Government. Twelve members are elected by the Native people as representatives of various parts of the Union. Any Bills affecting the Bantu population which the Government plans to lay before Parliament must first be submitted to the Council for its views. The Minister of Finance is also bound to consult the Council regarding any financial measure affecting the Bantu, and also on expenditure from the South African Native Trust Fund. The Council is also empowered to

recommend legislation to Parliament or to the Provincial Councils.

The Department of Native Affairs is almost a state within the state. It is responsible for the welfare and government of the Bantu throughout the whole Union. In urban areas it is continually administering Acts that have special application to the African population. In the Native Reserves it has a diversity of functions that on the European side are the responsibility of various state departments. It takes the oversight of law and order, regulates the occupation of land and promotes agricultural progress, seeks to further education, settles disputes according to Native custom, collects taxes and sees to the administration of local finances.

For the carrying out of these varied functions it makes special regulations. Thus we have what is known as government by proclamation. The power to do this is chiefly embodied in the Native Administration Act of 1927. This Act gives the Minister of Native Affairs power to alter existing laws, such as the Natal Native Code; to make laws applicable to some areas only; to demarcate new tribal boundaries and to order tribes or sections of tribes to move to a new area; to change the pass laws; and to frame regulations by which the influx of Africans to urban areas can be controlled.

Except in cases of emergency, all proclamations must be published in the *Government Gazette* one month before they come into operation. It is further required that all proclamations must be laid before both Houses of Parliament, so that Parliament may, if it wishes, alter or repeal any proclamation.

A large mass of legislation, particularly affecting the Native Reserves, is now enacted in this way. The strongest

argument for such procedure is that it saves a great deal of detailed and intricate legislation affecting the Bantu from being discussed by Parliament, where knowledge and time might be lacking for its proper consideration, and makes it the responsibility of a Minister who has the expert advice of officials whose lifework such service is. Moreover, as such regulations need not apply to the whole of the Bantu people but only to such as require them, it is possible for Government to deal with tribes according to their stage of development. Many, however, feel that the system places too much power in the hands of the Department of Native Affairs, which might on occasion be used arbitrarily. The system also perpetuates differentiation between the Bantu and the other elements of the Union's population.

Two matters deserve special attention in any review of how the Native people are governed.

One is the provision made for their taxation.

Till the early 'twenties of this century each province had its own system and there was considerable diversity in the Native taxation imposed by each Provincial Council. In 1925 it was decreed that only the Union Government could impose taxes on the Native people, and a general tax (popularly known as the poll-tax) was imposed on all adult males between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five. In addition, there is an annual hut tax (really a wife tax) of ten shillings per hut in the Reserves. Provision was made to exempt those who are physically unable to work or too poor to pay the general tax. Natives whose income is such that they are liable to pay ordinary Income Tax are not liable for the general tax. The general tax is due on the 1st of January each year, and if it is not paid by the following August the defaulter may be arrested, fined or imprisoned, and even after serving his sentence he is

still liable for the tax. All Native males, between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five must be ready to produce the tax receipt on demand. Considering the low cash wage given to many of the Bantu, £1 per annum is a considerable portion of their income. It is not long ago that a high ecclesiastical authority found that his 'garden boy' was paying more in direct taxation to the State than he was himself! It must be remembered also that Africans pay many indirect taxes, such as customs and import duties, taxes on tobacco and many other goods.

For a considerable number of years only one-fifth of the general tax was used for Native development, plus £340,000 which was a government block grant, representing the money spent by the Provincial Councils on Native Education in the year 1921-2, before they were deprived of the right of taxing the Native people. The remaining four-fifths of the general tax was paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. As the years passed and Native education expanded, larger shares of the general tax had to be used to meet its cost, until in 1944 the whole tax was assigned for this purpose. Even so, and with the £340,000 added, the sum was totally inadequate for the needs of educational service and in 1945 Parliament decided that money for Native education should come from general revenue and no longer be dependent on the poll-tax.

The other administrative matter deserving special attention is the provision made for Native land.

In 1860 there was established in Natal a Native Trust for the control of tribal lands. The main ideas were that if lands were under the control of such a Trust, they could be better preserved for the Bantu people, and the Trust, with Government funds at its disposal, could develop the



lands more efficiently. These ideas have had lasting influence and are embodied in present-day legislation.

In 1913, a few years after Union, a Bill was introduced into Parliament, providing that no European should — except with the special sanction of the Governor-General — purchase or lease land from a Native, and no Native purchase or lease land from a European, until a Commission could define areas to be Reserves for European or Native occupation, and make arrangements of expropriating the land held by Natives in European areas and by Europeans in Native areas. One of the implications of the Bill was that the existing Native Reserves should remain intact for Native occupation. The Bill became law in June 1913 — the famous Land Act of that year. There was annexed to the Act a schedule mentioning the areas which comprised, as far as was known, all the existing Native Reserves or locations throughout the Union, and also in many cases farms privately owned by Natives for tribal purposes.

As the Reserves were admittedly too small, the Act, to compensate the Natives especially for the restriction upon the common practice of hiring land from Europeans, contained a definite undertaking that, as soon as a Commission had examined and reported upon them, Parliament would set apart further 'areas within which persons other than Natives shall not be permitted to acquire or hire land'. The restrictions on the hire and purchase of land were indeed intended to operate temporarily pending further legislation based on the report of the Natives Land Commission. But this Commission, known as the Beaumont Commission, did not report till 1916. It proposed to set aside additional areas of 8,384,000 morgen,\* bringing the Native areas to 18,324,000 morgen

\* 1 morgen = two-and-one-ninth acres.

in all. For almost twenty years this recommendation remained a dead letter owing to the opposition of vested interests and the practical difficulties encountered.

In 1935 General Hertzog introduced into Parliament his Natives Trust and Land Bill. By it he proposed to establish a South African Native Trust, for the purpose of assisting Natives by acquiring land on their behalf and to help them to develop it. It was laid down that the Trust was to be administered for the settlement, support, benefit, and material and moral welfare of the Natives of the Union. It embodied an attempt to right the long-standing wrongs of the Land Act of 1913. The Bill became law, and the Government launched a scheme for the purchase of an additional 7,250,000 morgen, £10,000,000 to be expended in the following five years for this purpose. The war intervened, and up to the end of 1944 the land purchased amounted to 1,592,124 morgen at a cost of £4,863,482. The Trust also acquired free, apart from the pre-existing Scheduled Native Areas, nearly 1,500,000 morgen of Crown land in the released areas. Thus of the 7,250,000 morgen laid down in the Act, a little over 3,000,000 morgen has been acquired, leaving 4,250,000 still to be purchased. It is clear that the £10,000,000 will not buy the 7,250,000 morgen promised. Even when all the land is purchased, the Bantu will have only some thirteen per cent. of the surface of the Union as land where they alone may have rights of ownership. In fairness it deserves to be added, however, that some of the Reserves contained originally much of the best land in the Union.

The South African Native Trust, in which are now merged the Natal Native Trust and the Zululand Native Trust, administers a Fund which obtains revenue from the sale or renting of land, from various fees and fines, and

from grants made by the Union Parliament. The Trust seeks not only to acquire land for Native settlement but also to develop such land and to promote agriculture in Native areas. The Trust lands are administered by the Native Affairs Department which has framed rules and regulations aimed at preventing the tenants from ruining the new land by bad farming practices. Generally speaking also the new lands are let out in five morgen plots. The strictness of the new regulations and the limitation of lands to five morgen allotments have provoked considerable opposition on the part of Africans, especially in the Northern Transvaal.

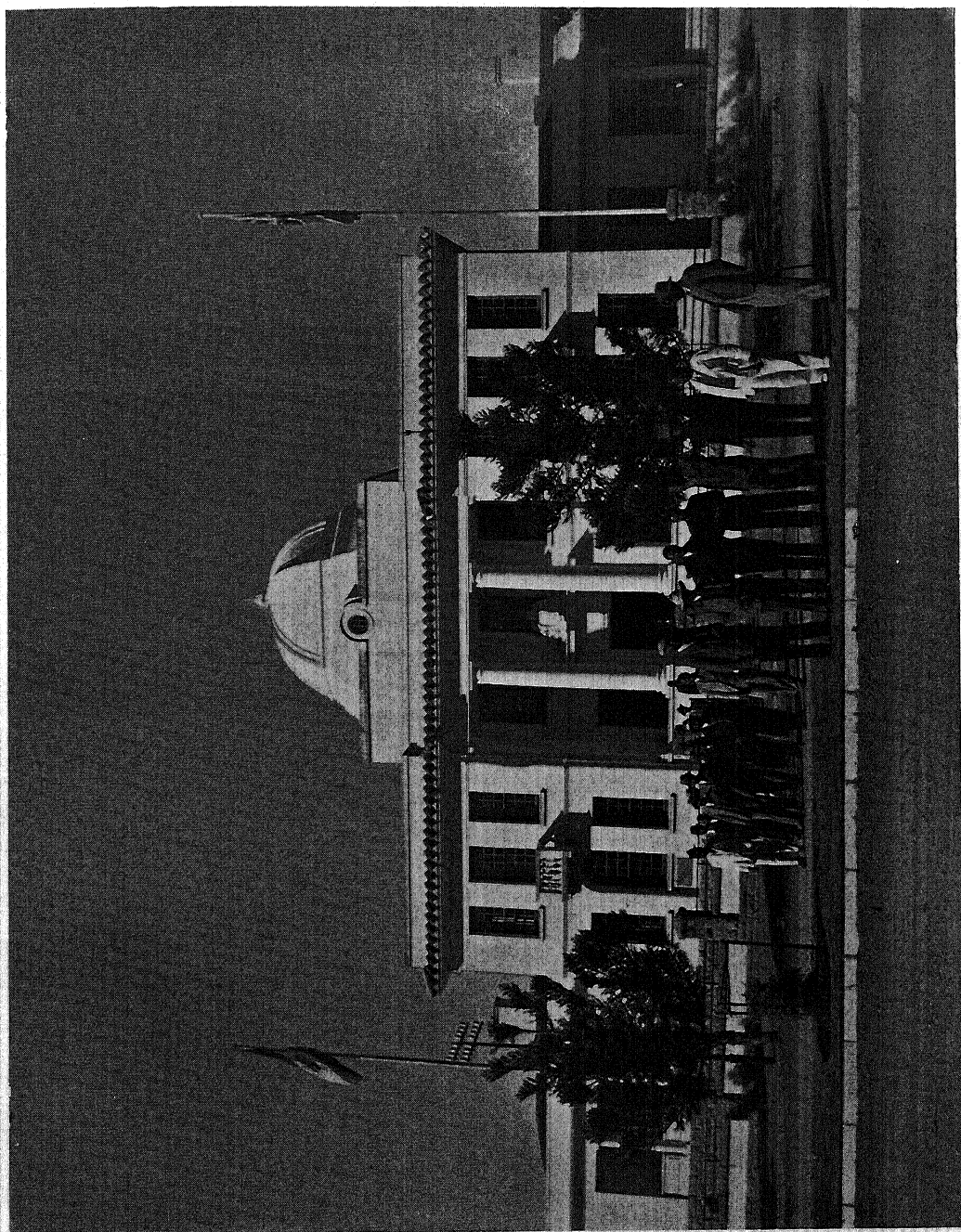
The Act, by other provisions, seeks to ensure that the only Bantu who will live outside the Reserves are (a) servants to Europeans, (b) labour tenants, who give service in exchange for the right to occupy land on a farm, and (c) those who are registered as employed in urban areas. Squatters who occupy land and pay a small rent to the owner but give no service in exchange for the land — a very common type in bygone days — are frowned upon, and are being gradually squeezed out by means of onerous regulations.

Such are some of the ways in which we rule the people who live in the land we live in. It is well that we know, along with some of its benefits, how complex and exacting that rule so frequently is.

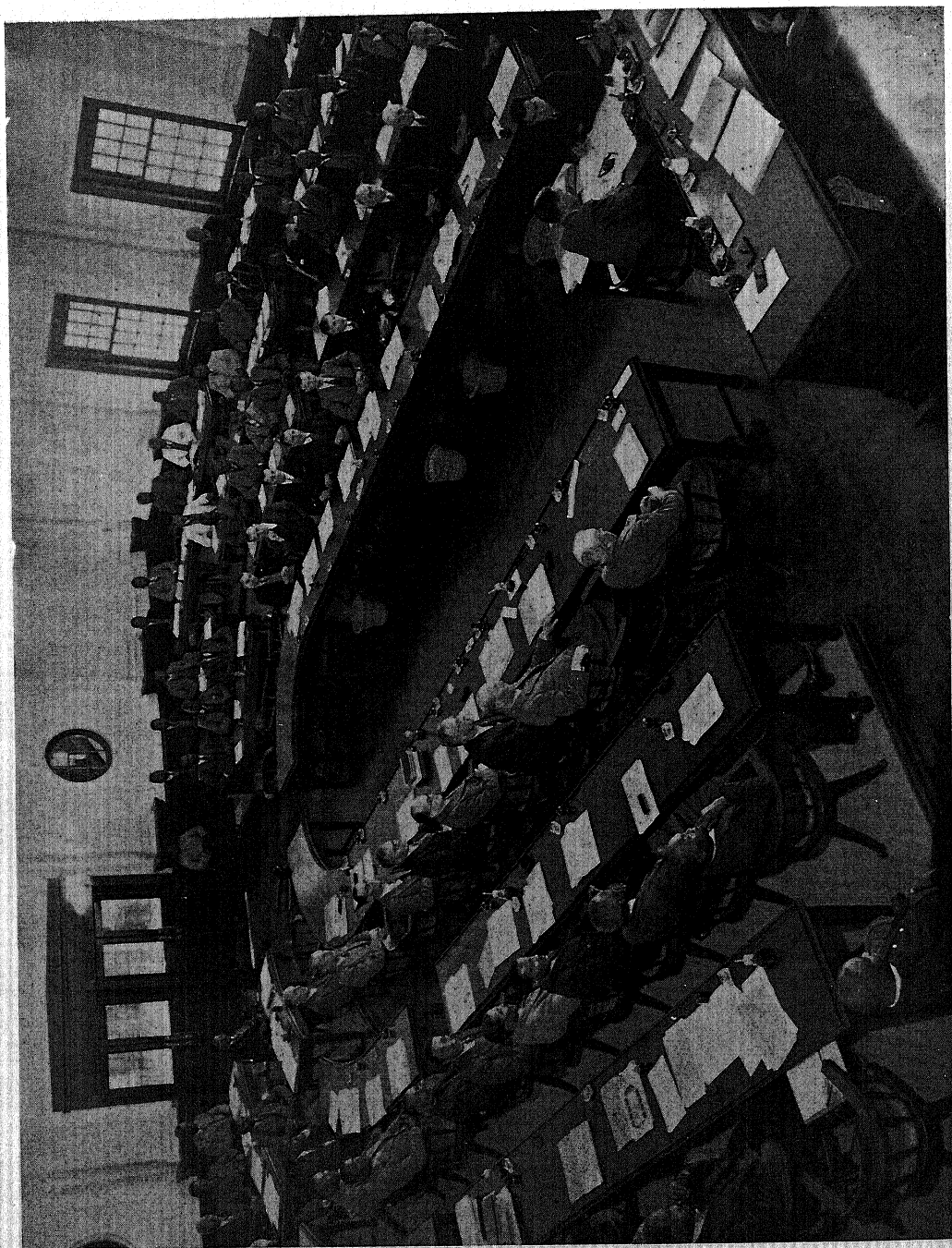


A Bechuanaland *Kgotla* — a tribal assembly of Chiefs, Headmen, and Commoners who have attained full tribal status.



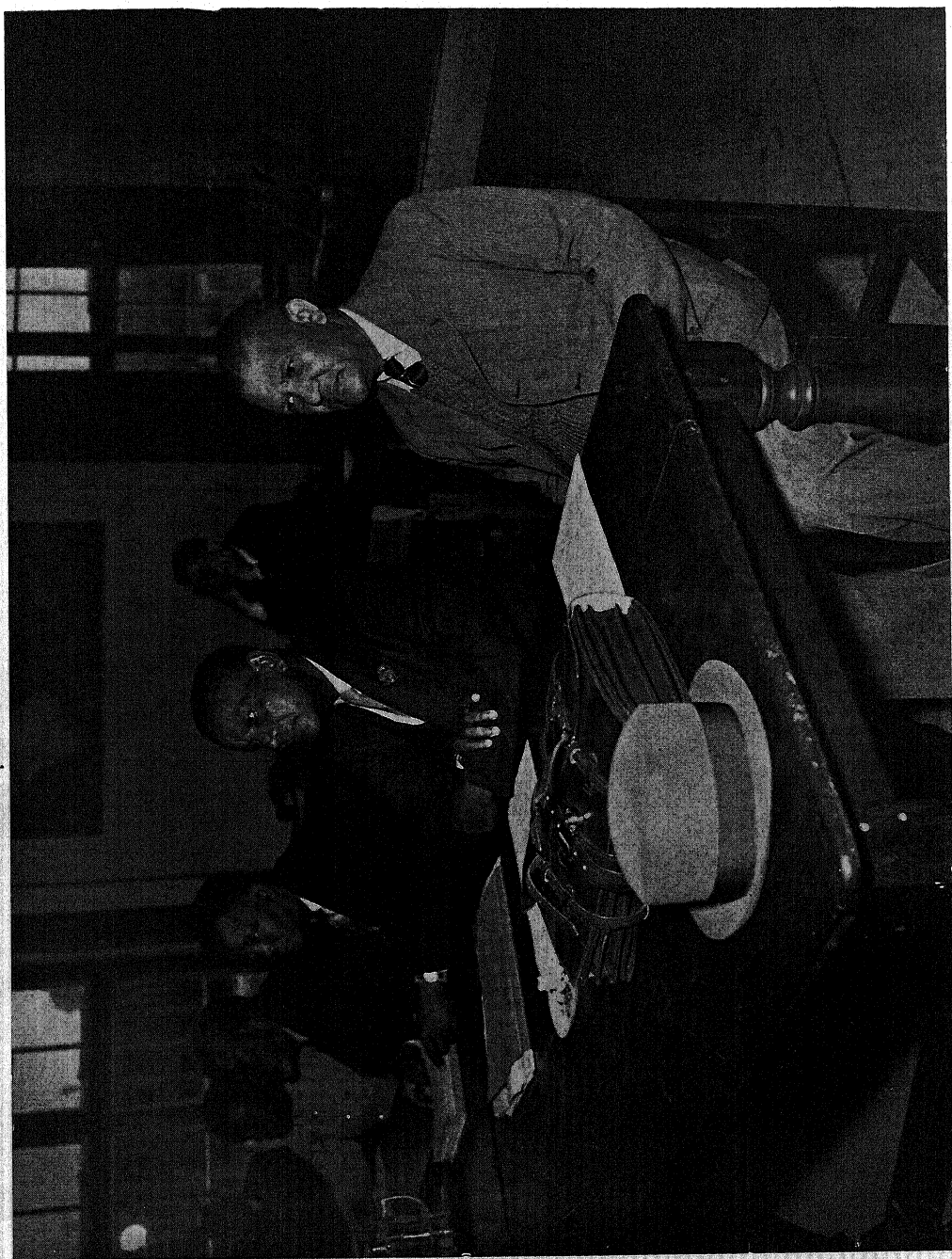


The *Bunga* building, Umtata, home of the United Transkeian Territories General Council, and some members of the Council.



The United Transkeian Territories General Council in session. The Council consists of African members and European Native Commissioners.





Members of the Natives' Representative Council at a meeting in Pretoria. The Natives' Representative Council was established in 1936 to consider legislation affecting the Native peoples of the Union.

## CHAPTER XVII

### IN THE EYES OF THE LAW

**A**N OUTSTANDING fact in our country is that some acts are crimes when committed by Africans but the same acts are not crimes when committed by Europeans. In other words, a deed is punishable with imprisonment or not so punishable, not according to its intrinsic nature, but according to the colour of the skin of the man or woman who commits it. It needs only to be stated thus to reveal how indefensible such a system is, not least in this twentieth century.

The poll-tax affords us an illustration. The European who has not paid his income or personal tax is not treated as one guilty of a crime. No one stops him on the street and demands his tax receipt. But, as we have seen, every year scores of thousands of Africans are accosted and imprisoned because they cannot produce a paper certifying that they have paid £1 out of their scanty wages. In September, 1940, Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr, the Minister of Finance, stated that a European married man with a salary of £525 per annum, who had two children and paid £35 in insurance, paid no income tax. With a salary of £550, he paid 3s. 1d. On the same day that the statement appeared, a notice in the newspapers warned Natives that any Native, including unemployed, who could not produce a poll-tax receipt certifying that he had paid £1 would be at once arrested.

The pass law is another instance. When one is travelling in a country not one's own, it is not unreasonable that the



authorities should demand that the stranger be in possession of a pass or passport, though this is demanded generally only on entering, and even concerning that the feeling of modern times is growing in favour of abolition. But to the African the galling fact is that this is required in the country of his birth and upbringing. And, in addition, there is the system of accosting anywhere at any time, and of imprisonment. According to the Johannesburg *Star* of Christmas Eve, 1945, out of 300 Africans chosen at random at Pretoria and circularised upon the subject of getting entangled at one time or another in the net of differential laws, 298 had never been arrested for a serious crime, but no fewer than 225 had had to pay fines for pass or poll-tax offences. If these men had not been able to buy themselves off by paying fines, they would have found themselves among the short-term prisoners.

It is true that the Government may grant exemption from the operation of the pass laws to certain people such as ministers, teachers, court interpreters and other professional men. But this means that the person exempted must carry a letter of exemption instead of a pass, and, except in cases where he is well known to the local authorities, he may still be stopped and asked to produce his exemption certificate. It is not surprising that one of South Africa's leading editors, C. D. Don, has described the pass law as 'stupid and unjust, costly to administer, and irritating and tyrannical in its application'.

The liquor laws provide another instance of differential treatment. A European can obtain all the liquor he wants and can pay for, at bars and bottle stores. A coloured man, with his mixture of white blood, may lawfully obtain large supplies. In some districts indeed he can purchase as many as twelve quart bottles a day, irrespective of wages

or character. But an African is supposed to be 'dry', and in general, except for certain cases of exemption, the law of prohibition is applied. In Cape Province, strangely enough, the possession of so low a qualification as a Standard VI educational certificate wins for a man a large measure of exemption.

The home-brewing of 'kaffir beer' is traditional with the Bantu people. But in many urban areas this is forbidden under the Urban Areas Act. Certain results follow. In an attempt to obtain their traditional drink, Natives resort to furtive brewing. The very secrecy has a demoralizing effect, since the brewing is known to be unlawful. Under natural conditions, the preparation of kaffir beer is a slow process, but under urban conditions, with the fear of detection by the police ever present, methods are adopted, often by introducing harmful ingredients, for quickening maturity. The resulting liquor is in many instances vile in its effects.

Again, for the suppression of this home-brewing, large numbers of police are employed to conduct raids, weekly or even nightly, in Native townships, particularly on the Rand. These raids are bitterly resented by the African people, whose rooms may be entered at any time, and are frequently entered at dead of night or in the early hours of the morning. Sometimes as many as two thousand people are arrested in one week-end on the Rand, mainly for liquor offences. The raids occasionally lead to the shooting or killing of people who seek to resist. At the same time, the fines imposed on the large numbers arrested bring big revenues to the authorities.

Once more, as it is a criminal offence for an urban Native to be in possession of even the smallest quantity of liquor, a not surprising result has been the creating

of an illicit liquor or boot-legging traffic in 'European' drink by some who are entitled to buy from stores. Not a few White and Coloured men make an easy living by this traffic. As in the case of hurriedly brewed beer, the Native is thus often encouraged to indulge in the semi-poisonous concoctions of such sellers, and is apt to acquire a taste for more potent liquors, with demoralizing effect on both body and spirit.

Over and above all this, the liquor laws, applied only to Africans, make thousands know the inside of prison who otherwise would remain outside.

In our land breach of contract among Europeans is a civil and not a criminal offence. As applied to Africans, it is criminal. Or to put it more particularly, it is a criminal offence for Natives to go on strike. It is not a criminal offence for Europeans to do so.

The rights of European workers are protected by their membership of registered trade unions. They come under the Industrial Conciliation Act, which has laid down certain procedure for industrial negotiation between masters and men. When European workers have observed the procedure and it has failed to win the higher wages or better conditions they demand, they are free to strike. African trade unions, despite repeated applications for it, have so far failed to obtain registration within the framework of the Industrial Conciliation Act.

Other circumstances have also contributed to make redress more difficult for the Bantu. When they began to seek service under Europeans, the various Governments of South Africa enacted laws to give the masters control over their Native servants. Some of these laws, known as Masters and Servants Acts, go far back. In Natal they were enacted in 1850; in the Cape in 1856; in the

Transvaal in 1880; and in the Orange Free State in 1904. They applied chiefly to farm labourers and domestic servants, because when they were passed industrial firms in South Africa were practically unknown. The Acts gave the masters power to prosecute their servants in a criminal court for breach of contract — a thing unknown on the European side. Breach of contract, too, was a wide term because it was made to include not only desertion, but insubordination, refusal to carry out a specified piece of work, carelessness when in charge of stock, absence without leave and other offences.

It follows that the Bantu cannot engage in a strike because absence from work is a criminal offence. Bantu workers see Europeans bettering their conditions through the strike weapon, but they find it almost impossible to combine for similar action.

It is true that under the Masters and Servants Act masters also must fulfil their part. They must observe the terms of the contract as regards wages, food and land agreements. But in view of the colour of their skin their failure to do so is a civil and not a criminal offence.

How it can work out in practice is illustrated in the following case, the facts of which came out during a trial in the Johannesburg magistrate's court in December 1945.

There are ninety-one firms engaged in the timber trade and they employ 8,000 African workers. In 1942 the men asked for an increase of wages. In October 1942, the Wage Board (established under the Wage Act) intimated that it would hold an inquiry. No agreement was reached by the Board, and the men were, by arbitration, given one shilling a week additional to their pay as a temporary measure while the Wage Board continued



its deliberations. In February 1945, the Wage Board gazetted their findings. These awarded an increase of from twenty-five to forty per cent. in wages of unskilled labourers. These findings declared plainly two things, (1) that the men's wages were grossly inadequate, and (2) that the employers in question were able to afford the increases recommended by the Board. Before making an award the Wage Board is bound by its constitution to examine the employer's books and to satisfy itself that these employers are in a position to pay the additional wages the Board recommends.

In making known its findings the Wage Board gave the usual notice for any objections to be lodged within thirty days. During the thirty days the employers took legal advice, and ultimately it was declared that the Wage Board's findings could not become law because many timber producers were farmers, who could not be covered by industrial legislation.

How did the Native labourers act in face of the protracted negotiations, the declaration of the award, and its subsequent annulling? Though right was on their side, the men for some months — except for a partial abortive strike, stopped by the men's own (unregistered) union officials — went on working. But one morning, early in December 1945, more than three years after their application to the Wage Board, the workers at a certain timber yard, numbering 129, were found to be staging an orderly sit-down strike. The men said they would not resume work unless they were promised better wages. At 4 p.m. the same day the men were told by the Native Commissioner that they must either resume work or take their passes and go. They sat still. At 4.30 they were arrested by the police.

White workers doing what these men had done would not have been counted guilty of a crime. But for the one and only reason that they were Africans, men of a certain colour of skin, they were brought before the Magistrate, convicted for 'failing to obey a lawful order to work,' and sentenced, each man of them, to a fine of ten shillings, or seven days' labour.

Some fruits follow from our system of differential laws and our habit of making criminal offences among Africans of what among Europeans are civil misdemeanours.

One is that we blur the distinction between serious crime and mere petty infringements of administrative regulations. The distinction is all the more blurred when we send, for example, the homicidal burglar (probably with all his passes in order) to the same cells as an offender against the pass laws. The African people are admitted on all hands to be a naturally law-abiding people. In tribal life there is a remarkable respect for and conformity to law and the tribal conventions. Many impalpable factors constrain the African to obedience. Mr. Julius Lewin, a legal expert, has well said:

It is precisely these vital if impalpable factors that are absent from the relation that has now been established between Africans and the law by our present Native policy and by our elaborate network of Native administration. Indeed, nothing measures the magnitude of our failure so clearly as the lawless habits now all too common among a public whose special heritage was marked by such deep respect for law and order. . . . The pass laws, the urban areas legislation and the liquor laws alone constitute an immense range of possible offences, a range so broad that no African can be sure at any time that he is not committing an offence. I make bold to say that the legal position to-day is such that the police can arrest any African walking down the main streets of Johannesburg at any time of the day or night, and any competent prosecutor would have no difficulty in finding some offence with which he could be charged.

There is another consequence. It is the progressive manufacture of long-term and even hardened criminals. Mr. W. G. Hoal, the Secretary for Justice and Director of Prisons, addressing a conference on crime at Johannesburg in June 1945, described the ascent in crime of Native criminals from trifling misdemeanours, in some cases mere inadvertencies such as non-possession of a pass or a tax receipt, up to serious felonies. Mr. Hoal told how prisoners have fifty-five regulations prescribing conduct and thirty specific offences in addition, the breach of any of which might subject them to further punishment. His further comments merit reproduction in his own actual words.

These regulations are posted up in every gaol and carefully studied by all who can read. They are explained to the illiterate. We, who are not in prison, run the risk of contravening thousands of rules, of many of which we have never heard, and for the contravention of any one of which we may be punished. The position of the 'free Native' is infinitely worse, as there are many more laws which apply only to Natives.

Mr. Hoal went on to say:

I have examined the records of hundreds of long-term prisoners at most of the big institutions in the country. Some are first offenders who have committed serious crimes—murder, culpable homicide, rape, etc., but the vast majority are recidivists with a number of previous convictions. Almost invariably they had started their careers with a petty offence—some trivial theft or assault, gambling, possession of liquor, or non-possession of a pass or tax receipt, leading to a sentence of a small fine—or a few days' imprisonment. In case after case I have found a progressive series of seven days, fourteen days, three weeks, a month, two months, three months, in carefully graduated homeopathic doses accustoming the prisoner to gradually increasing periods of imprisonment. In the vast majority of such cases I found that on an average the prisoner received his first sentence of six months on his sixth

appearance. Had something been done to save him from that first fatal seven days he would probably never have graduated into the over-six-months class.

Mr. Hoal added:

In the year 1943, 157,887 convicted persons were admitted to gaol, and of these 96,962 were for one month or less. Almost all Natives have no means of paying even a small fine. In such cases imprisonment is really a punishment of poverty.

It may be argued that with a people emerging from barbarism more rules and regulations are necessary than with those blessed by centuries of civilization behind them. On the other hand, it may be contended that those unaccustomed to the ways of Western civilization should be treated with more leniency when they do commit offences, particularly when it is remembered how so many of them suffer from illiteracy and general ignorance. Certainly it seems indefensible to treat with the severity of criminal deeds offences which in the more favoured race are treated as civil misdemeanours. To herd hundreds of thousands of a law-abiding people into prison every year on account of differential laws, and so frequently for mere contravention of regulations, is surely, to say the least, a mistaken method. The constant liability for imprisonment can only produce embittered Africans even among the best, with the consequent loss of their co-operation in furthering commendable measures. Among the worst, frequent experience of prison can only lead to deeper degradation.

We have quoted two who are deeply versed in Native law and penal conditions. Among many others who might be cited for their strictures on present-day conditions, we will content ourselves with a reference to Judge Krause, whose summing-up on the general position of the Bantu



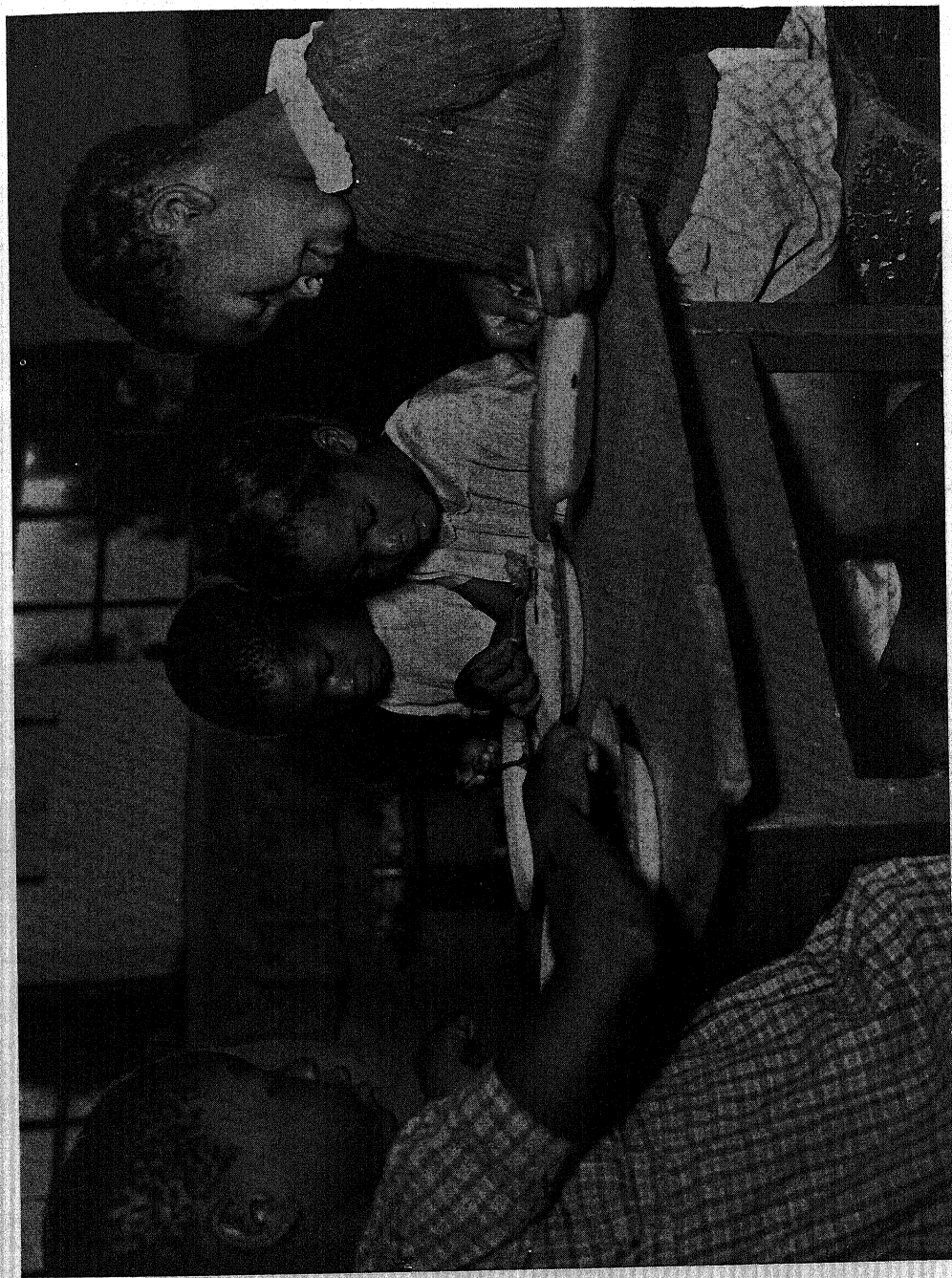
provides food for thought to all who love our land. The former Judge recently felt constrained to declare:

The Native is all the time a prisoner in the land of his birth, although he might not be confined within prison walls. The reason why he is a prisoner in this sense, and the treatment which he receives at the hands of the White overlords are by no means a credit to our much-vaunted superior civilization. Our colour prejudice has become more virulent and accentuated. We should never forget that the Native is our fellow-citizen, and that he is one of the greatest assets we possess in the industrial life of the nation. It is, consequently, not only bad policy to keep him a 'prisoner' in the wide sense in which I use the term, but also it may eventually lead to our economic destruction.



Education begins with babyhood.  
This is one of the very few crèches assisting in the care of the children of tens of thousands of Native mothers who daily leave their homes in Native locations to act as laundry women and domestic servants in European homes.



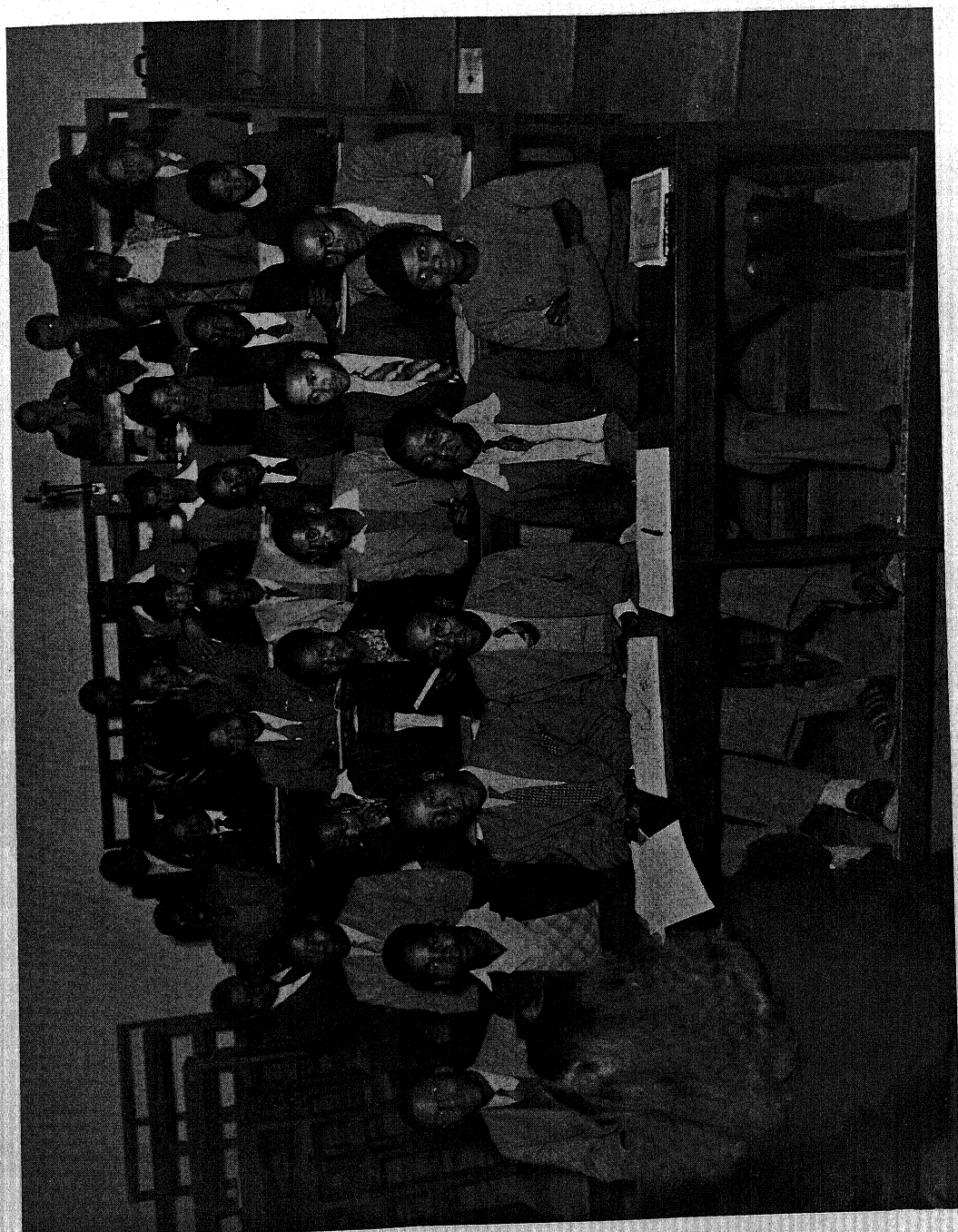


'Give us this day our daily bread'.  
One of the happiest features of Native education to-day lies  
in the fact that the government scheme for the feeding of school  
children has been extended to Africans.

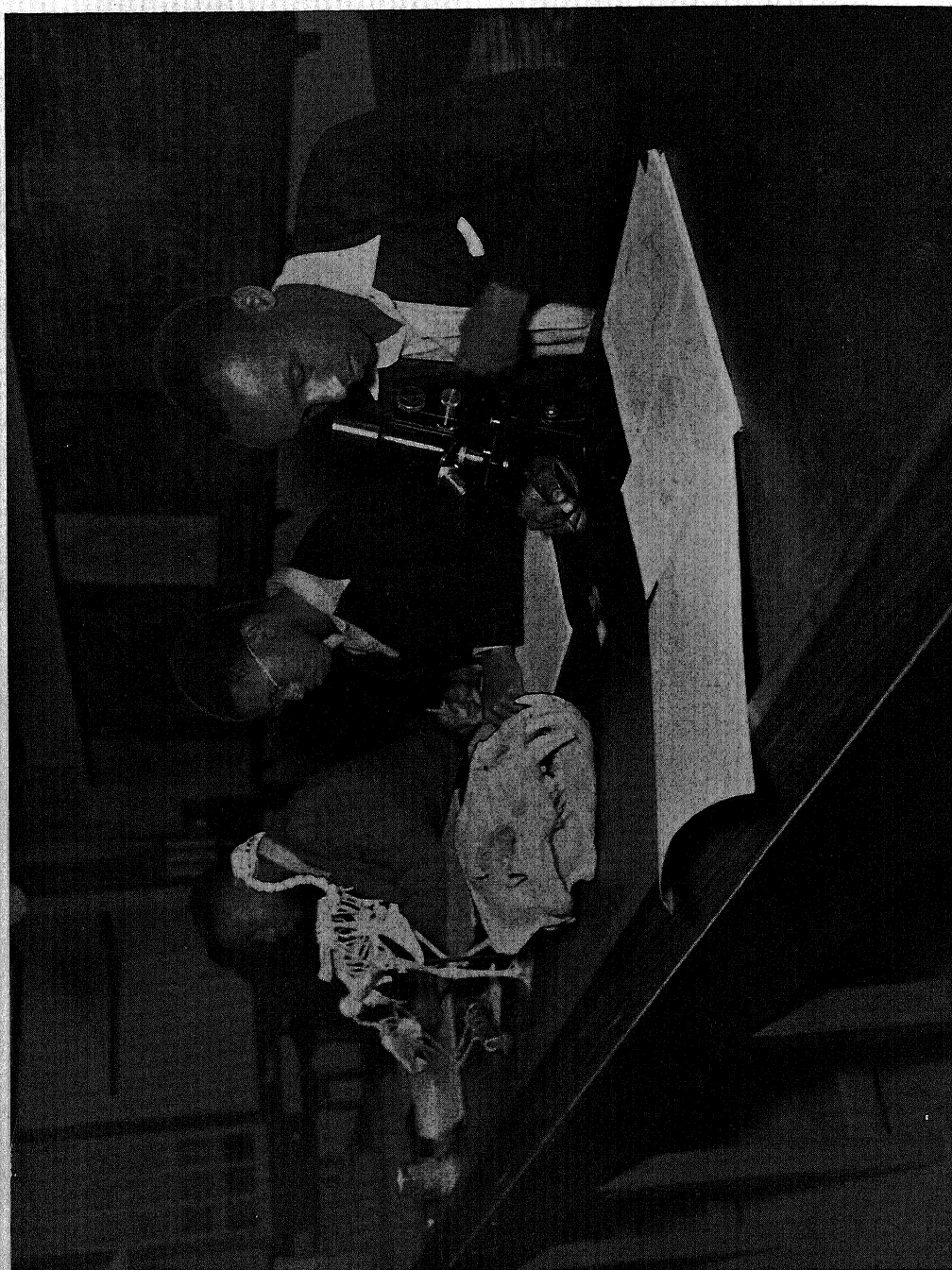


A school in the veld.



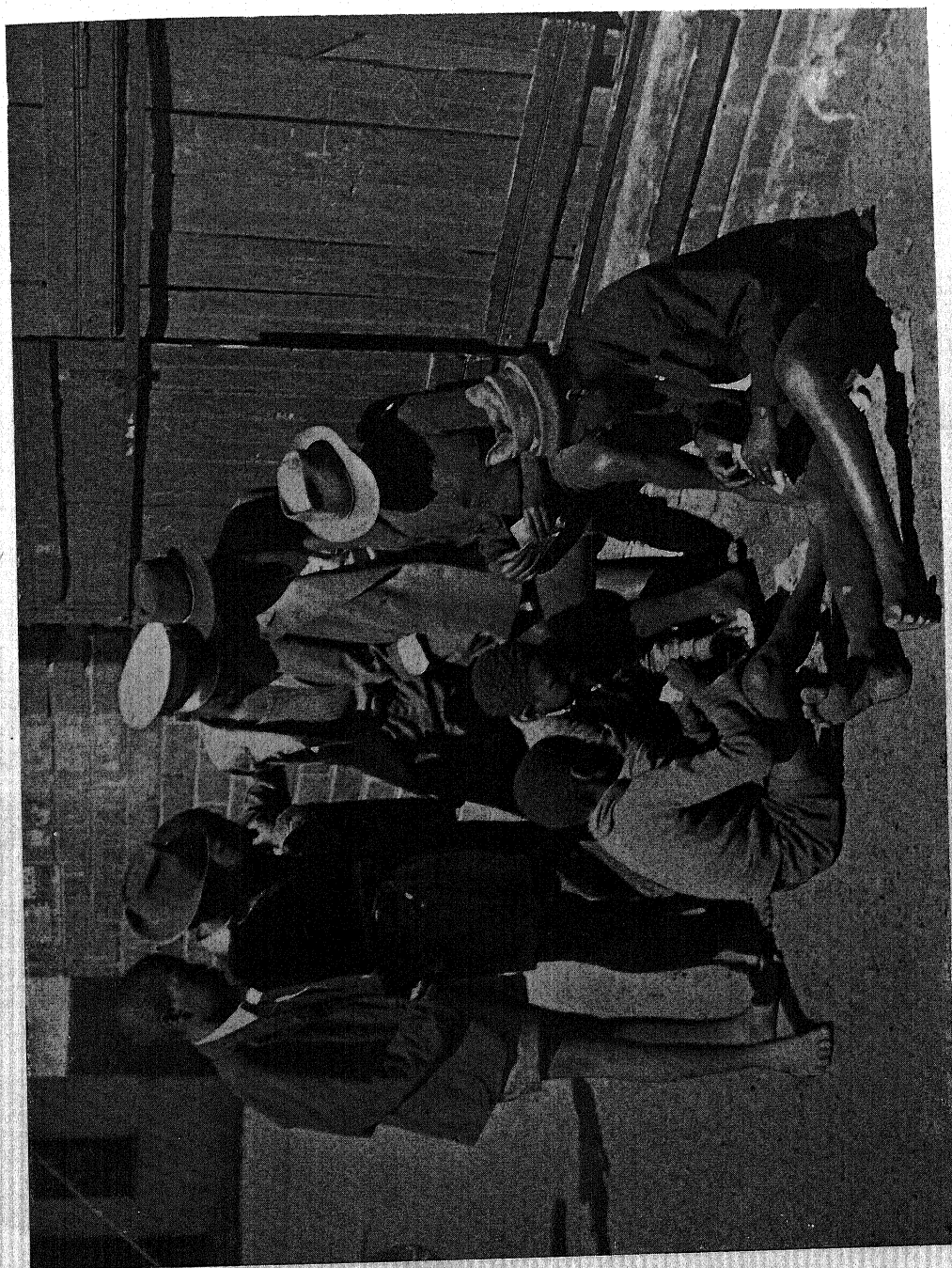


Senior students at Fort Hare Native College.

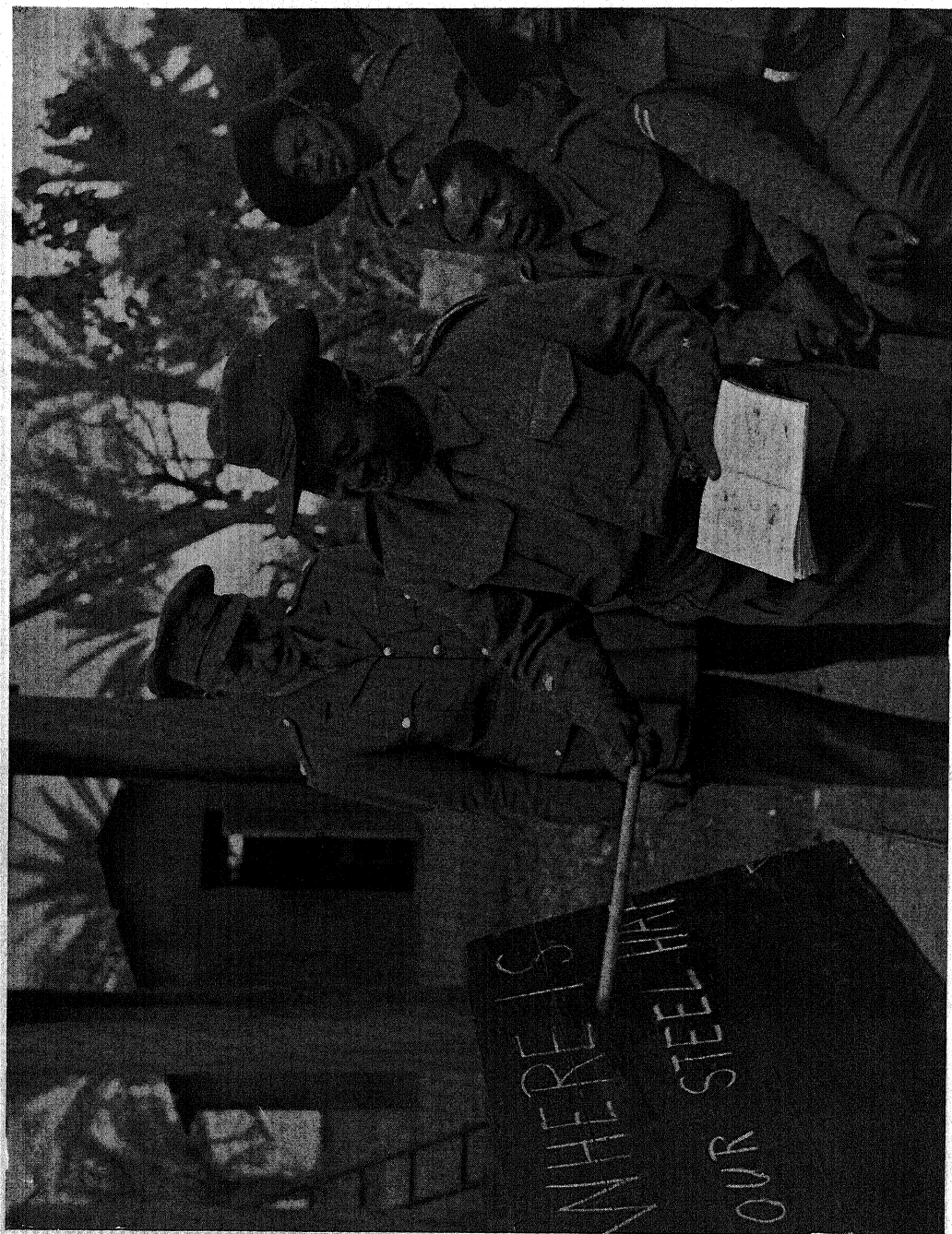


The skull of a lion and a modern microscope; and, in the background, Africans moving out of the past to take their place in a civilization which must be common to all mankind.



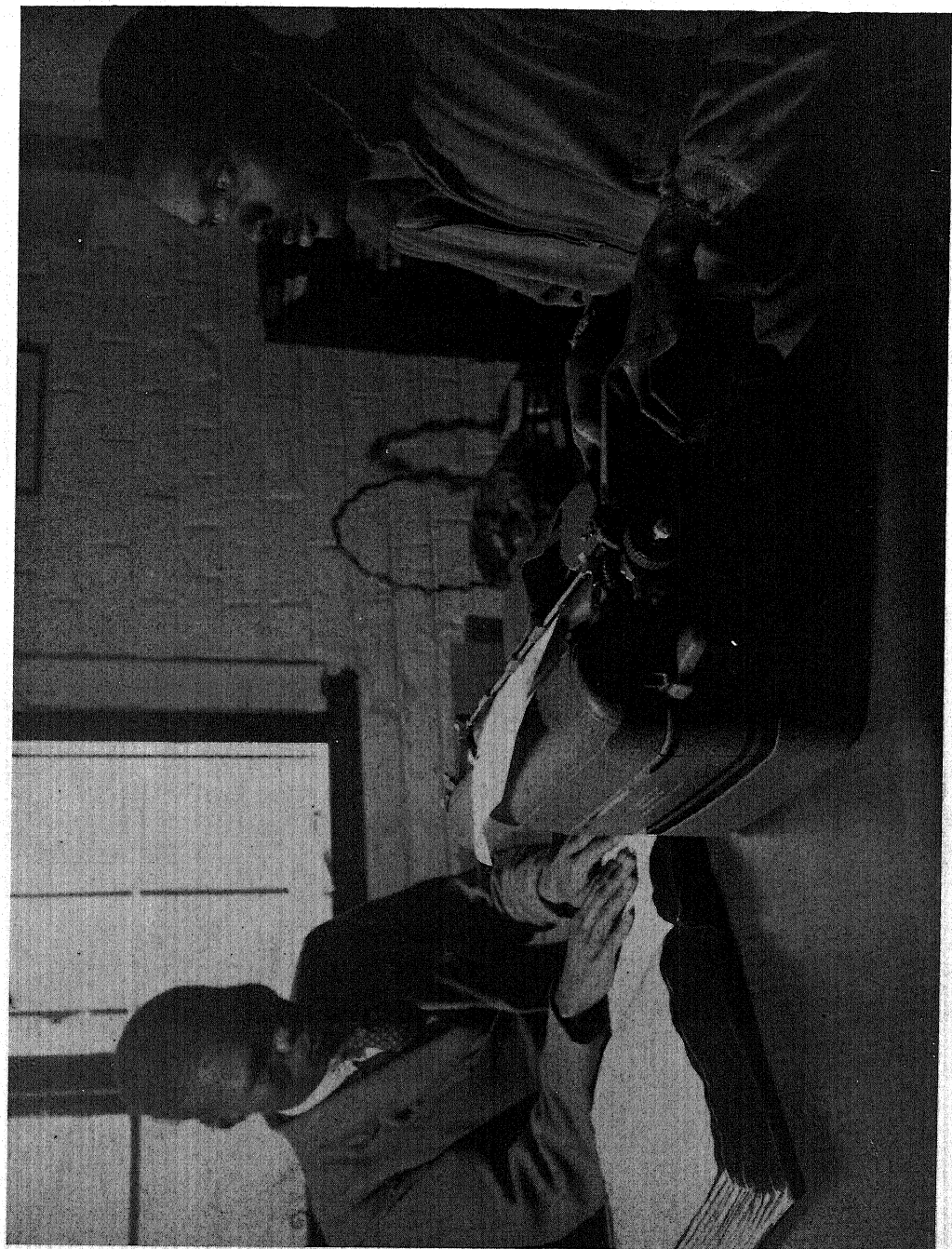


Much has been done — more remains to be done.  
For hundreds of thousands of youngsters such as these their primary education  
is that of the street arab, qualifying them, with little check, for the university  
of crime.



The war gave an impetus to adult education and proved how much could be done for those who had missed school.





Of the 27,000 blind Africans, only a handful are as yet receiving instruction in Braille and in this, as in other fields, education has a vast part to play.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### ACHIEVEMENT AND FAILURE

THE MOST divergent views may be held on the present position of the Native people of South Africa. When we ask what has been accomplished for the progress of the African race, it is possible to say 'Much', or to say, 'Little': some would say, 'Nothing'. It is possible to see the situation as wrapped in clouds and darkness, or to see it in bright hues. All depends on what we select for attention and the features on which we close our eyes. Much depends also on whether we view affairs in the light of what has actually been accomplished, or whether we view them in the light of our own high or low ideal. Perhaps in no racial situation has there ever been a greater mixture of elements that, when viewed separately, inspire men with optimism or sink them to pessimistic depths.

The situation is not helped by the extremists on either side. Some spend their days 'damning the nigger', treating him as dirt beneath their feet, and calling for bullets as the solution of the 'Native problem'. They declare that there will be no peace until the African is 'put in his place' by being taught that the White man has the guns and that they will be used against all who question White supremacy. On the other side, as expressed by Father Callaway — that great and sane and devoted champion of the Non-Europeans — 'there is the extremist who turns acid whenever he thinks of the Europeans in South Africa. He has lost all sense of balance and proportion. He fails to see the really great and good achievements of Europeans in the

past. He has no just pride of race. He ignores equally the sturdy independence of the early Dutch emigrants, the heroism and idealism of the French Huguenots, and the moral greatness of many of the early English settlers'. In short, he sees the European as nothing but an oppressor, whose record is one of unfairness, cruelty and exploitation.

A constant danger that besets the advocate of the African is that he will overstate his case, by seeing nothing but the sombre aspects and stressing these, or by dwelling only on what has not been done. After all, it is much easier to state the disabilities than to dig into history and see the actual position. This, however, does no ultimate good to the African side. It wins over no enemies and may alienate friends. Much was wrong in the past and still mars the present. But credit must be given where it is due. If, therefore, as we have done, we call up the historic past to emphasize that certain of our actions are outdated, we must turn in fairness and in equal confidence, to the same historic past in order to seek to give in clear perspective what has been accomplished in breaking with the evils of yesterday.

We shall begin with Native poverty. When men look at that poverty, there surely comes a sense of pity. Why should so many individuals have so little? Why, for thousands, should the greatest quest of each day be, Where may the next meal be found? Why should that poverty be deepened because maize is exported from our land with heavy subsidy, so that it may be sold at low prices in the markets of Europe, while a much higher price is charged for the same product in the markets of South Africa, where it is the staple diet of countless Africans and 'poor white' Europeans? Again, why should maize be sold more cheaply to South African farmers for cattle

feed than it is to the impoverished Natives about their doors? Such practices make a heavy indictment.

On the other hand, history shows a growing credit side. There is no questioning the upward trend of Native wages in recent years. To many the greatest difficulty has not been the obtaining of money for the purchase of food, but the obtaining of food with money in their hands. The cost-of-living allowances, granted most of all to low-paid workers, including hundreds of thousands of Africans, have altered the income position for many. Such allowances have admittedly not opened the door to affluence, but they have certainly given security against want.

During recent years the Government scheme for the feeding of school children has been extended to Africans, with beneficial results on their physical condition and their ability to learn. In addition, the scheme for pre-school feeding in drought-stricken areas during 1945-6 has saved countless lives. It was a natural but humane touch that made this scheme available for nursing mothers.

In the year 1944, the Union Parliament made upwards of 353,000 Africans eligible for old-age pensions, and also made provision for pensions under certain conditions to blind Africans who have attained the age of nineteen. The pensions are small, but the numbers are large: there are 27,000 blind Africans on the register. Another 117,000 Africans are benefiting from an invalidity scheme, by which every African, sixteen years old and over, who is totally and permanently incapable of working, will receive an allowance equal to that given to old-age pensioners.

More important than relief are the efforts being made to enable the Bantu to be more efficient workers on the land. It must be admitted that many, when left to themselves in the Reserves, are improvident, and their



agricultural methods are poor and wasteful. Not all the blame, however, is on their side; there are other factors making for inefficiency. Those who do have land — there are many thousands now without any — receive as individuals little or no assistance, financial or otherwise, from public sources, while European farmers, wealthy as well as poor, are lavishly treated with grants, loans and exemption from taxes. Most hurtful of all to agriculture is, however, the system of migrant labour, especially on the mines. Large numbers of Africans whose homes are in the Reserves have to depend mostly upon wages which they earn elsewhere for the support of their families. Thus they are often absent from home when ploughing and other operations are due, and these are performed by the aged or very young. The system is fatal to agricultural efficiency or development in the Native Territories.

As an offset to the deterioration which has resulted, the Department of Native Affairs makes great efforts to stimulate the production of food in the Reserves. This is done by anti-erosion measures, by the extensive employment of trained African agricultural demonstrators, by propaganda showing better methods, and by attaching special conditions to the occupation of newly-acquired Trust land. Most of all, however, are vast rehabilitation schemes now set on foot in the Native Territories, which are costing millions of money. For their success what is required most of all is the whole-hearted co-operation of the African people. These schemes — the alternative to which is 'desert conditions' — are among the brightest features of Native policy in South Africa. Indeed, each annual report issued by the Native Affairs Department presents now an impressive summary of what the Union

Government is doing for the greater material prosperity of the African people, particularly in the Reserves.

In matters of education it is possible to point to the fact that something over three pounds is spent annually on the education of each African child, while a sum of about twenty-five pounds is spent on each European child. We may also fix attention on the sixty per cent. of African children still out of school, and bemoan the tide of delinquency which is rising because so many urban children pass their days on the streets, and are growing undisciplined, illiterate, unfed and unwilling to work.

On the other side, while twenty years ago the amount spent on Native education in the Union was £340,000, to-day it is nearly £4,500,000. Even more important perhaps is the fact, with all its promise for the future, that African education is now a national affair, the Union Government having accepted full responsibility for financing it, and having put it on the same footing as the railways, health and social services. It is perhaps not generally known that, thanks to missionary funds and government subsidy, young African people by the hundreds in secondary and teacher-training schools obtain forty weeks' board and education each year for the low sum of £15 10s. At the South African Native College, Fort Hare, the inclusive fee for board, education, sports, medical attention and examination is £50 per annum. It may be asked whether an education of university standard is obtainable in any other country for £50 per year? Two White universities, Cape Town and Witwatersrand (Johannesburg) now accept a limited number of Non-European students. The Union Government too is paying scholarships of £225 per annum each to some thirty Bantu students, in order to enable them to qualify in medicine for work among their own people,

and has erected a hostel for these students at a cost of £33,000.

Among the things accomplished some would say that even more noteworthy is the content of education now being given. There are notable government agricultural schools training young Africans for work on the land; there are domestic science schools fitting women for home life of a higher kind than they have known; there are hundreds of Bantu nurses in training for work among the sick; and recent schemes have led to the opening of a school for the training of Home Welfare Officers; and there is envisaged the training of veterinary assistants. Again, the primary school syllabuses are being more and more related to daily needs in African society, and are not mere copies of the European. The home language of the pupils, hygiene, gardening and manual work have all a secure place. The education being given, as a leading African has put it, is taking due account of the fact that the African is living in the modern world, in an environment which includes both Western and African elements linked indissolubly together.

Great strides have been made in providing the Bantu people of South Africa with literature in their own tongues. True, it is possible to speak of wrapping up the literature published in some African languages in a pocket handkerchief, so meagre is it. The chief South African languages, however, are far past that stage. The seven languages used within the Union have all been reduced to writing, orthographies provided, dictionaries, grammars, school books and general literature published. Magazines of different types and some ten or more weekly newspapers circulate to-day among the Southern Bantu. These weekly newspapers have 500,000 readers and in their influence

upon the development of the African they are making a very real contribution.

A corps of African authors has been raised up and they have produced books in history, biography, fiction, drama, poetry, folk-tales, proverbs, as well as religious books and school books. Most of these are in the vernacular languages but some are in English. In short, a literary movement of some dimensions has begun among Africans. How the movement is growing and African education is spreading may be judged from the fact that one press, whose field is African literature, sold in 1932 a total of 43,000 copies of books, besides magazines, pamphlets, etc. In 1946, despite war and post-war conditions, the same press sold no fewer than 272,000. The story of progress in this sphere requires a volume to itself.

As our chapter, *SICKNESS OF THE BODY*, has shown, much remains to be done for the health of the African people. Blindness, unhappily, is common among Africans. It has been estimated that there are between 32,000 and 33,000 blind Natives in the Union, though others put the figure higher. Among Europeans and Coloured people about one in a thousand is blind; among the Natives in some areas the percentage is three out of one hundred. Much of this is preventable and much curable. To many concerned for public health the greatest cause for anxiety is the spread of tuberculosis and of venereal disease among the Bantu. The former is taking a heavy toll, and the latter, though not so prevalent as alarmists love to declare, claims hosts of victims. Countless numbers succumb each year to deficiency diseases.

On the credit side of health, there is no denying the increased effort being made to ensure physical fitness



among Africans. Perhaps in no field has it been so truly recognised that there ought to be no colour bar. More is being done for African health to-day than in any previous stage of the country's history. No large effort, either local or national, is now made for the furtherance of health without the needs of the African people being in the forefront. Provision to bring them relief is deemed essential in any scheme. In the big plans of the new national health services they have a foremost place.

In the chapter, *HOME LIFE IN ITS EXTREMES*, we dealt with the appalling conditions of Native housing in many parts. But as a symptom of the better trend in this field it may be mentioned how Major P. V. G. van der Byl, the Minister of Native Affairs, recently disclosed that from 1st October 1945, to 31st May 1946, no less a sum than £1,772,785 was allotted to cover loans for Native housing under the Government's sub-economic housing scheme. Of this amount £1,006,264 was actually issued.

On the great work done for Non-Europeans by the missionary bodies we could long linger. Volumes could be written, and indeed have been written. A statement of simple fact was made when the Native Economic Commission of 1930-2 declared, 'There are few races who owe more to missionary effort than do the Natives of South Africa.' In the educational, medical and industrial fields missionaries have made contributions beyond price. And in addition they have brought to the Bantu the greatest of all gifts — the gift of the Christian gospel. We shall not attempt to summarize the contributions they have offered but one great by-product merits more than passing mention.

Because of missionary and other effort our time has witnessed increasing growth of a desire for a square deal to the Non-Europeans. Some would say that of the

features in the present situation this is the one that most of all inspires hope. In quarter after quarter there has been a stirring of the public conscience, and deeds as well as declarations have told of a larger, more humane and more Christian outlook. In some of our universities these things have been specially marked. Cape Town and Witwatersrand students have voted repeatedly for according Non-European students the same academic rights and privileges that are accorded to Europeans. In addition to the larger and smaller missionary institutions, some of which have now been at work for more than a century, various non-sectarian bodies, like the Race Relations Institute, are making constant efforts for the betterment of Native conditions, and their work is not merely useful but far-reaching. More and more municipalities are showing a sense of obligation to the Non-European community. The Government aims to assist the African people by a more expansive and perhaps a more practical education and by expenditure upon ameliorative social services and reclamation of the Reserves, while economic forces are effecting a slow upward movement of wages. These advances have behind them a large body of public opinion. Indeed, the trends in diverse quarters reveal that it would not be fanciful to put into the mouths of many modern South Africans J. B. Priestley's words:

There is something in us now that will not rest nor find any lasting satisfaction while most human beings still exist in poverty, ignorance and despair. We have to make the round earth our home. We have at last to have faith in people, compassion for people, whether they have white faces, brown faces or black faces. This hope of a home on earth, this faith and this compassion are now at the very centre of our lives. If we're moved by them, if we base all our actions on them, we begin to live, drawing strength from the waters of life.

This is not to say that all is well. There is indeed no ground for complacency. It was early in this decade that Dr. D. L. Smit, then Secretary for Native Affairs and Chairman of the Government Committee investigating economic, social and health conditions among the vast urban population, declared to the Durban Rotary Club: 'Every member of the Committee has been stirred to pity, if not to shame, at the conditions of life which we have witnessed in the shadow of our largest and most beautiful cities; at the poverty, the disease, the dreadful infant mortality that exist at our very gates.' The fact is that, with all that is being attempted, not enough is being done. And even where something is being attempted, too often the spirit behind the effort is self-regarding, with an eye to the ultimate interests of the White race. All efforts, too, meet with opposition from those who contend that the present Government and present trends are too liberal. They object to 'White men's money' being spent on Native betterment.

Even should the present trend for better things continue and its pace be increased, there will be no racial peace in South Africa while some things remain undone. Some actions on the part of the ruling race would change the whole South African scene. If four shafts of light were made to pierce the present darkness, the landscape would be lit up.

The first of these needed, positive acts is the removal of the colour bar in industry. No race can be expected to remain content while its members are artificially restricted from acquiring skill because of the colour of their skin, and in order to ensure that a small White aristocracy of labour may receive wages that by comparison seem wealth indeed. Nor can their hearts find rest while their power

of bargaining in the labour world is thwarted because their trade unions have no recognition given to them.

The second requirement is the provision of adequate land. An originally pastoral people, that outnumbers the White race in the Union by three to one, cannot be expected to deem thirteen per cent. of the land surface of the Union a sufficient share, however beneficial the schemes propounded to make their portion produce its maximum of crops and carry a maximum of stock.

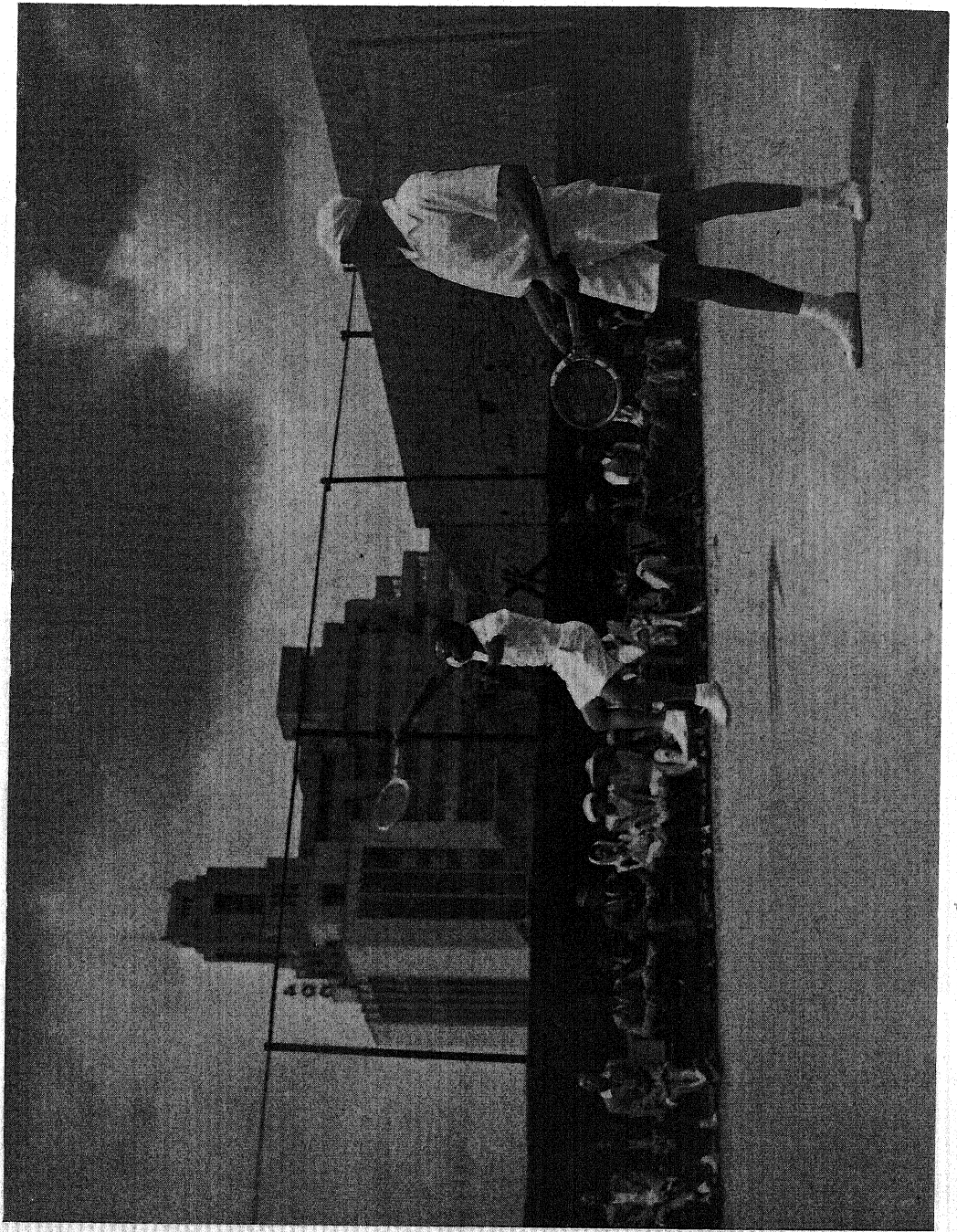
The third demand is the abolition of the pass law, with its stigma to men in the land of their birth and nurture. And with it should go much of the differential legislation, which is made to cling and hamper, however high the standard of life to which individuals may attain.

The fourth *desideratum* is the abrogation of the franchise disqualification. However useful the work done by the United Transkeian Territories General Council and similar bodies, and however much the Natives' Representative Council may serve as a nationwide forum for the expression of African views, the Bantu to-day carry a sense of political frustration. Although they form so large a part of the population and do so much of the country's work, they know that in the political life of South Africa they have no real place. Yet the Christian doctrine of the essential worth of every man has cut deep into their consciousness. And they know that a powerful figure in South African politics advocated equal rights for every civilised man.

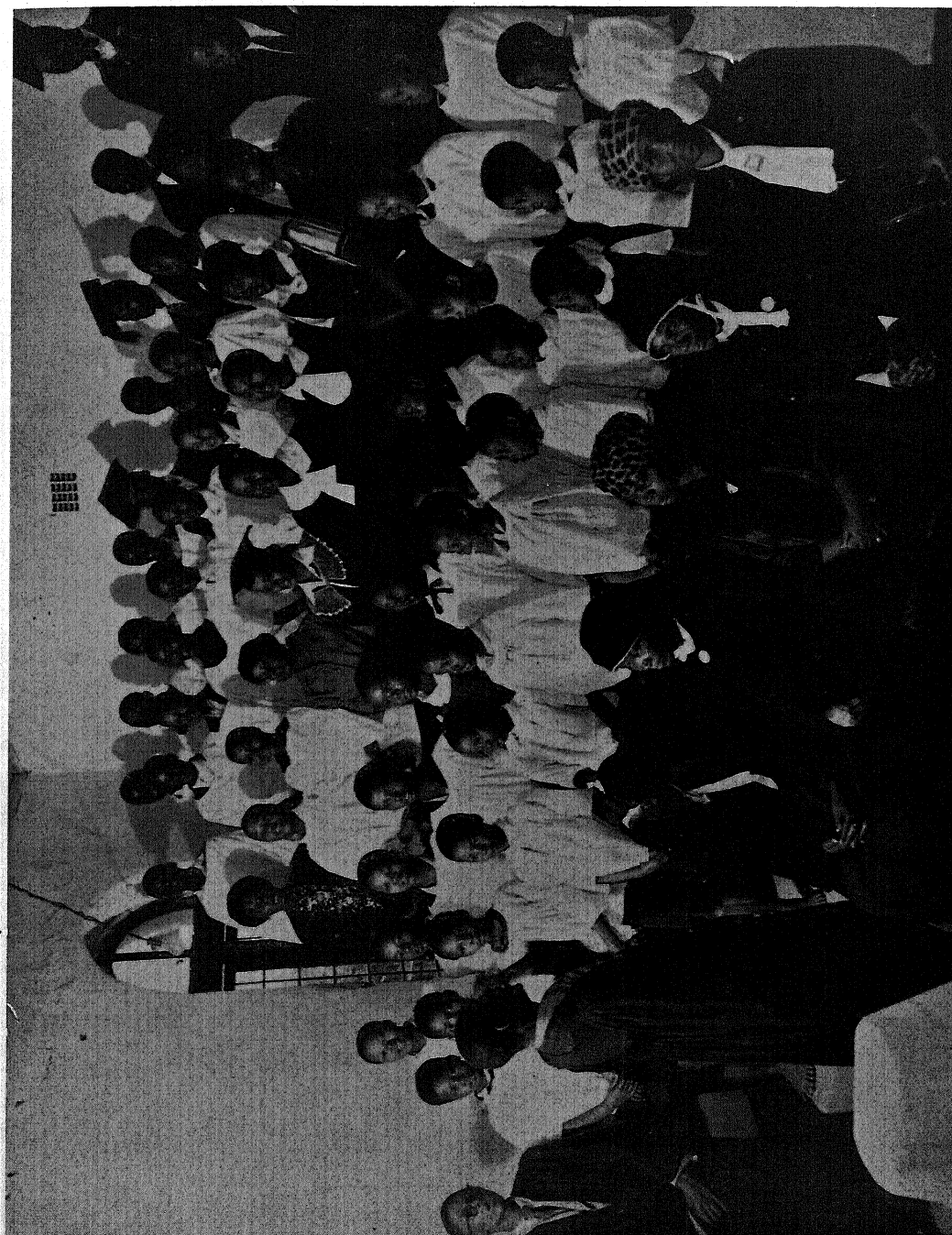
The removal of the colour bar in industry, the provision of adequate land, the abolition of the pass laws, and the abrogation of the franchise disqualification—these are four of the essentials for racial harmony within our borders. These are the goals towards which those of



humane spirit must strive. That their acceptance would imply a great transformation in the public mind of South Africa, is only another way of saying that the march of progress among us is slower than among the rest of men. No government can go much beyond the wishes of the majority of those on whose suffrage they depend. But public opinion can be changed. And there is reason to believe it will be changed at this end of our continent, for already there are signs that the situation is loosening, and the objectives mentioned are the democratic common-places of our age.



Tennis, and a skyline the Black man helped to build.



An African choir.  
In the main, Europeans lack the African's inborn sense of harmony and song.





The Morabaraba game being played on a sidewalk in Johannesburg.  
The lack of recreational facilities forces Africans in domestic and commercial service to spend their leisure hours in the streets of the large cities.



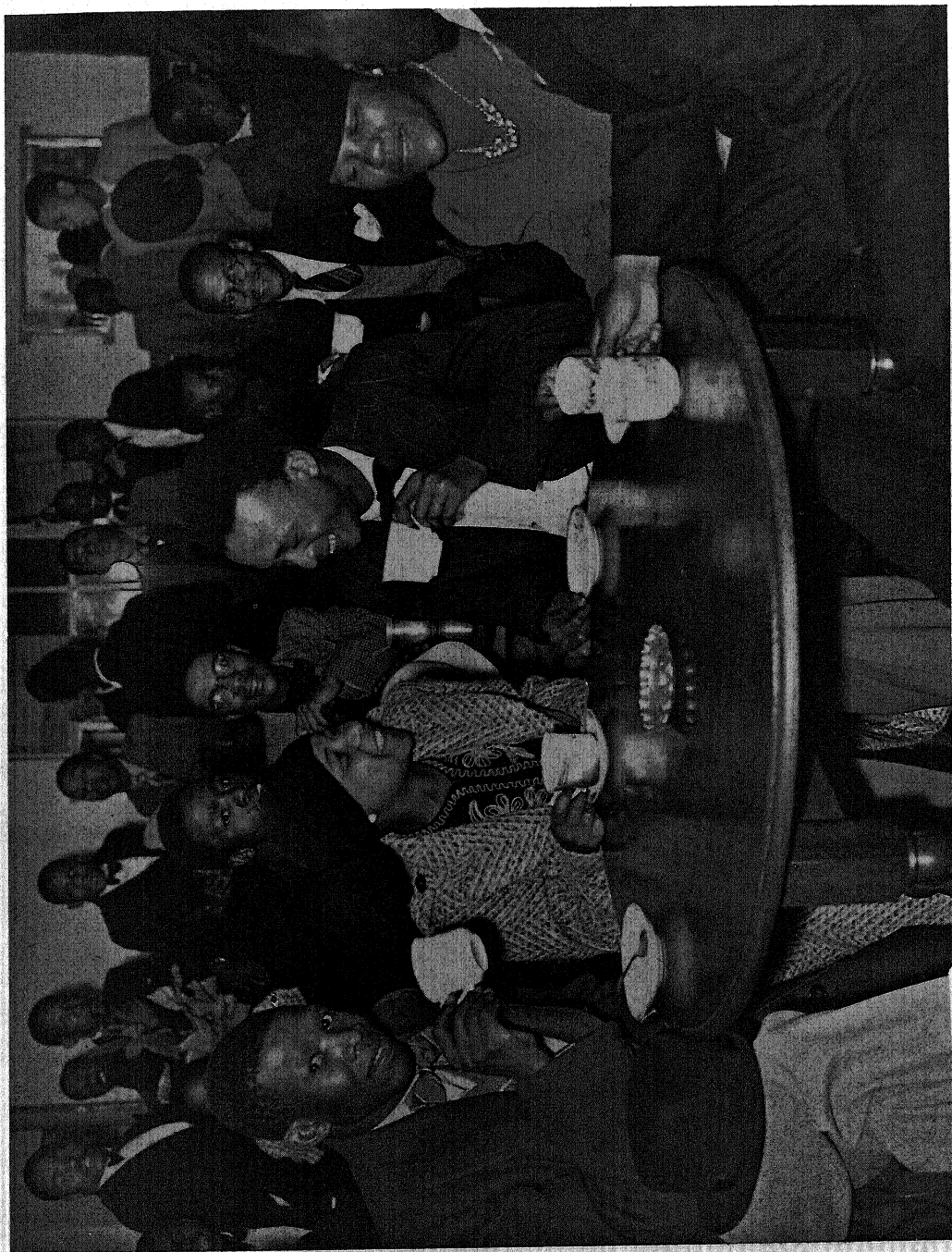


Coaching in scrum work.

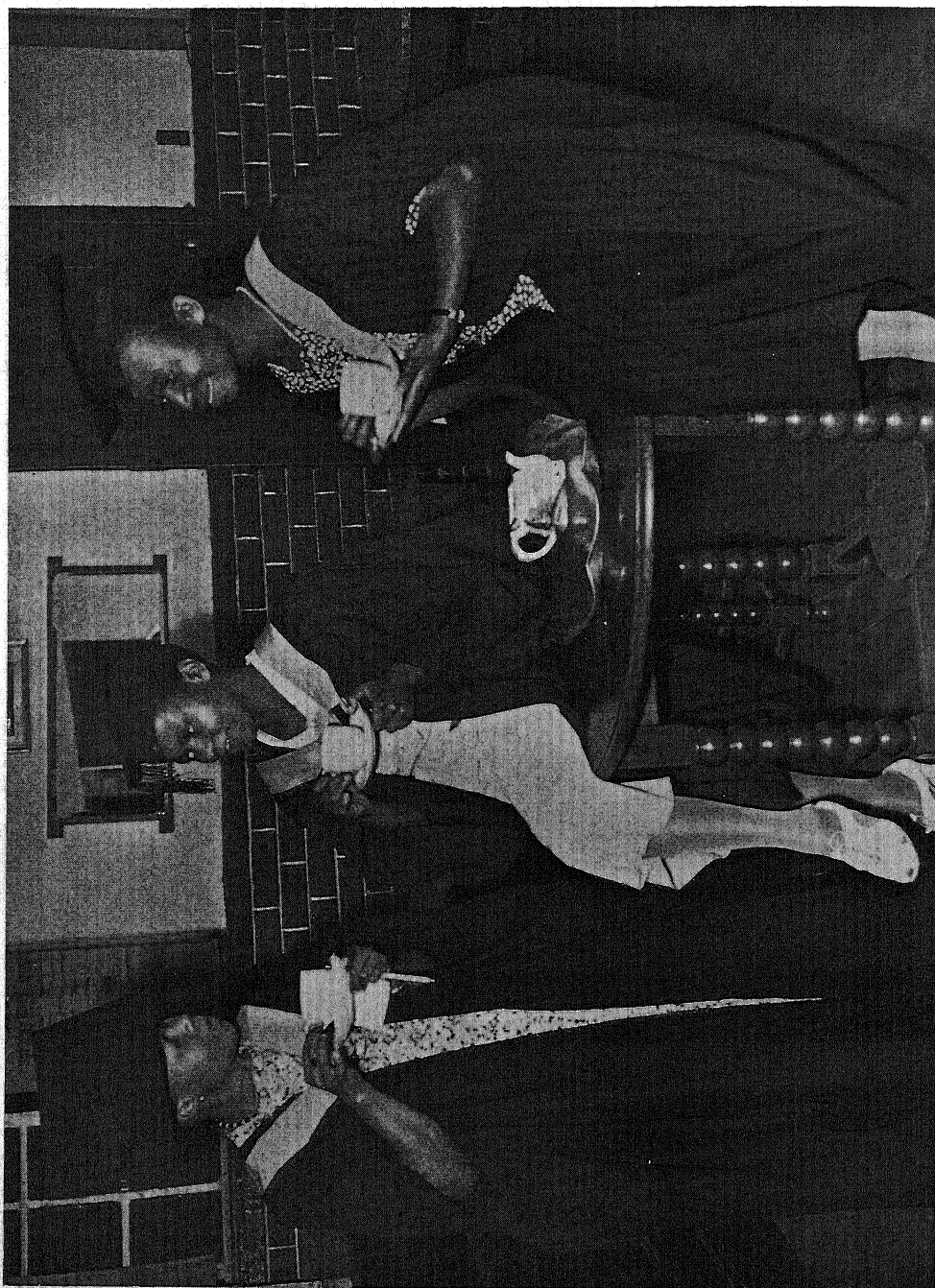


A group of youngsters selling African newspapers. One of the African's strongest characteristics is the spontaneity of his happy spirit.





Can we object if a lucky few copy a social life we ourselves have created?



To-day. Three African girls with degrees:  
Miss V. P. Monala, B.A.; Miss M. Msomi, B.A.; Miss G. Dzivane, B.A.





To-day. Three Princesses, Semjalose, Polite and Konzepi of Swaziland.

## CHAPTER XIX

### ASPIRATIONS AND AMBITIONS

THE AFRICAN has his aspirations and ambitions. Many of them have been cited in previous chapters. They are expressed in political, economic and social wants. That the Bantu have surging desires in these spheres no one acquainted with them can forget. They want adequate rights in the political world, not least the right to govern themselves and so shape their future. The right, too, to work as others work, with a decent return for their labour. They want good health, decent food, decent housing and a decent education. They are aware—to take one example—of the glaring disparity between the wages paid to skilled and unskilled workers in South Africa. A member of parliament, who is not a Native representative, recently told the House of Assembly that the relation between unskilled and skilled wages in other countries was 53 per cent. in Canada, 60 per cent. in Britain, and 75 per cent. in Australia. In South Africa, he stated, the rate is 16 per cent., with unskilled workers earning 6*d.* per hour and the skilled 3*s.* 6*d.* per hour. Africans, who form the vast majority of the unskilled workers, want a fairer deal than that.

When, however, we have tabulated such specific ambitions, we find that they are but the products of a spiritual condition. They are the outward growths from the African soul. That soul is vibrant with one dominant passion from which such growths spring.

It is sometimes said that large political issues like the abolition of the old Cape Colony franchise are of less practical importance than the economic, industrial, legal and other disabilities and restrictions imposed upon the Native. So great a friend of the African as Charles Davidson Don has expressed this view. But this is to miss the point. It is not the loss of the old franchise that rankles; it is the implication behind the loss.

The African soul will remain unsatisfied so long as the civilised African man is not treated as an integral part of the population of the Union, so long as he is classed as a being apart, with special laws made for himself alone.

It was significant that when a European recently addressed a great Native audience and touched on some of the wants of the African, the remark that evoked the warmest response was the simple declaration, 'We shall never get near enough to understand the African until he comes to feel that we meet him as a man'. The whole sum of Native aspiration and ambition may be found in his longing to be treated as one having true human feelings and capacities, as one with us in an 'essential humanity'.

Some advances in that direction have been made. But they ebb and flow like the tide, and the high-water mark comes short of desire. The use of the term 'nigger', so common in bygone days, has now become a brand indicating an inferior European. On the other hand, it is not so long ago that an eminent politician described the Native as a 'menace'. As we have emphasized, the Bantu are now included in almost every scheme of social betterment. But, on the other side, by the great majority of Europeans within our borders the African is classed as *permanently* inferior.



It is because of this last assumption that the iron enters the soul. It is this negation of the hope of development, this denial of a common humanity, that touches the quick.

The African longs for the day when his rights as a man will be conceded, when he will know that by the sweat and toil of generations, but even more by his proven humanity, his full partnership in the land of his birth is no longer in dispute.

If it were not so, the Bantu would be a craven people, obsequious and not so interesting or worthy of esteem.

All his aspirations and ambitions are wrapped up in this.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE FUTURE OF TO-MORROW'S CHILDREN

THIS BOOK is the story of a people whose lives in recent years have been fashioned in a pattern largely of European making. As yesterday had its place in the moulding of our lives and theirs, so to-day forms the mould of the future, and nothing is surer than the fact that the future of to-morrow's children lies chiefly in the hands of the European minority. European South Africa cannot escape this abiding trust and fashioning of a common destiny.

What aspect will the future take? It may be contended that on this theme there is too much speculation. Prophecies are idle, and yet the European South African finds prophesying a happy pastime, discussing sometimes with relish the possibilities of a great upheaval or the contingency of a coffee-coloured race. Too rarely is there an appreciation of the 'mighty harmony of everlasting change'. The future of to-morrow's children does not lie in the hands of 'We Europeans' only, any more than it lies in the hands of the Africans. Inexorably we are inter-dependent.

While the future must be so largely veiled and while to each generation comes the simple duty of seeking to ensure that every step taken is in accordance with eternal right, it remains true that the forces of to-day are making for 'one world'. The shrinking of the continents, so that nations, formerly remote, now jostle each other through aeroplane and radio and other scientific wonders, is making inevitably to prevail one civilization. And that civilization is Western. Its start, given by Rome and Greece, and its

gathering momentum while Africa and the East were slumbering, has made it irresistible. No doubt Africa, especially when her development is fully come, has something to offer to the world that only Africa can give. She has metal of her own that is but waiting to be coined. Yet, whatever peculiar offerings Africa may bring, she will find that the main strands of culture will be of the texture of the West. Into this heritage she will enter, and no force or manœuvring to deny her access will keep her out. Victor Murray spoke truly when he said: 'And if for us, barbarians and Gentiles, Plato thought and Virgil sang and Jeremiah agonized — and Christ died, these things happened for the African too. For him also in later days Beethoven played, Leonardo painted, Shakespeare wrote, Pascal disputed and James Watt invented. There is no African culture — as yet. There is this universal heritage waiting to be taken up by them'.\* And it will be taken up. By some it is already taken up.

Again, without wild prophesying we may say that the present set-up in our land will not always continue. The Native will not always be 'deprived of education, debarred from acquiring skill, employed as a menial, scorned as an inferior, poll-taxed, pass-lawed, compounded and segregated'. The world-tide is flowing strongly against such conditions. Already it has broken the dykes in land after land. It will yet do so in our Sub-Continent.

Some of our conditions to-day are reminiscent of the social evils in England early in the last century. Then the common people lived in ignorance, wages hardly sufficed for the body's needs, and the manner of life was little above the animal level. Children, not in their 'teens, worked from twelve to fifteen hours a day in factories,

\*Victor Murray, *The School in the Bush*, 323.



in a hideous environment, under iron discipline, cruelly treated so that they might remain awake during the long hours. The education of ordinary folk seemed rankest heresy. It is difficult to believe that so late as 1807, Giddy, afterwards President of the Royal Society under the name of Gilbert, opposed as a Christian duty the education of the masses, declaring that however specious in theory the project might be of giving education to the labouring classes or the poor, it would be prejudicial to their morals and happiness: it would teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of making them good servants in agriculture or other laborious employments; instead of teaching them subordination it would render them fractious and refractory, as was evident in the manufacturing counties; it would enable them to read seditious pamphlets, vicious books, and publications against Christianity; and in a few years the legislators would find it necessary to direct the strong arm of power against them.

Despite such forebodings the social revolution gathered momentum and could not be stayed nor confined, as the conditions of our time so amply witness. The liberation and the education of the humbler classes went on apace until to-day they are among the commonplaces of British life.

So, we may be sure, in similar fashion will come the future of to-morrow's children here. All the more surely will it come because the heart of young, white South Africa is sound. The illiberal, reactionary speeches of some in our Parliament will yet make them to be classed with the Giddys of the century that has gone. The young Afrikaner, be he of Dutch or British descent, is freeing himself and rising with clearness of vision and strength of purpose to consign unworthy racial pride and domination to the limbo of outworn things.



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